The Landscape of Clearance
Changing Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century Scottish Painting

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This thesis explores the incidence and import of imagery surrounding the Highland Clearances in nineteenth-century Scottish painting. It recognises that the Clearances comprised a wide range of responses to the changing economic, agricultural, and social currents that shaped Highland landscape and life throughout the late-eighteenth and well into the nineteenth-century and consequently includes paintings that extend Clearance imagery beyond the most commonly reproduced works of the era.

In the Introduction to the thesis, I present the subject of the Clearances and establish the common coincidence of landscape imagery, in both painting and travel writing, that extols the Highland landscape while simultaneously recognising the vast social, economic, and environmental changes effected by the resettlements, evictions, and emigrations of the Clearance era. This disconnect within the perception and portrayal of the Highland environment forms the basis for the later discussions of specific types of Clearance-related imagery in nineteenth-century art.

Chapter II offers a concise outline of the major events of the Clearance era, from about 1750 through the later decades of the nineteenth century, and complements the historical details with an investigation of the existing literature on both Clearance subjects and Scottish art history. The historical background serves as a basis for the interweaving of art and history that characterises the following chapters and for the reconciliation and discussion of the primary areas of disagreement that have arisen within the scholarship. In this chapter, I also describe the wealth of available historical sources and contrast this abundance with the dearth of art historical sources dealing with subjects like emigration, landscape, and labour in Scottish painting. As a result, I argue for the wider use of a variety of other source material, like painting, poetry, and landscape analysis, in the investigation of Clearance history.

Chapter III presents an initial foray into the theme of rural distress through the early-nineteenth-century paintings of Sir David Wilkie. His works, like The Rent Day and Distraining for Rent, emerged against a backdrop of increasing countryside dispossession and, through their wide distribution as prints and within the theatre, served as emotive images depicting the plight of the rural poor, in both England and Scotland. This chapter's engagement with landlord and tenant relations demonstrates the currency of rural distress within the arts and introduces a framework of visual conventions that reappears in many later Clearance-era works.

In Chapter IV, I investigate the subject of rural labour in the paintings of the Clearance-era, arguing that a wider interpretation of the Clearances must include depictions of the changing types of employment that swept the Highlands throughout the nineteenth century. These changes in land use are central to the events of the Clearances and represent an often-unexplored area of both history and art history. The chapter then offers a categorised discussion of the various types of Clearance-era labour, including sheep farming, cattle droving, fishing and kelp harvesting, illicit whisky distillation, agriculture, and other forms of rural labour and poverty. The collected paintings are discussed within the larger scope of Victorian art and social realism and are shown to possess particular resonance in depicting the land use changes of the Clearance era.

The theme of Highland emigration constitutes the main topic of Chapter V. Following a discussion of the varied course of Clearance-era emigration and the

academic disagreement the subject has generated in the historical literature, I investigate the dominance of emigration imagery within current-day and nineteenth-century perceptions of the Clearances. The relevant paintings, which extend far beyond the popular image of Thomas Faed's The Last of the Clan, are then discussed in terms of the wider realm of Victorian emigration subjects as well as within the highly specific field of Highland emigration. Other crucial emigration sources, such as Gaelic and English-language poetry and song, are consequently employed in the elicitation of distinctively Highland themes of nostalgia and geographical specificity in the collected paintings of Clearance-era emigration.

Chapter VI explores landscape paintings and further reinforces the centrality of the Highland landscape in expressing the course and after-effects of the Clearances. The duality inherent in nineteenth-century (and contemporary) perspectives on the value of the increasingly uninhabited Highland "wilderness" and the simultaneous shifts in settlement and land use that characterised the Clearance era are discussed through the use of Victorian travel writings, eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, and poetry. The dearth of scholarship on Highland landscape painting, despite its prevalence and popularity as a subject, is also noted. I then show that the assembled paintings remain linked to these landscape conventions while also offering an acknowledgment of the settlement and land use changes that shaped the Highland environment during the Clearance era.

The thesis closes with the conclusion that, due to the close linkage between the Clearances and the Highland landscape and to the simultaneous growth in the popularity of the area as a subject for artists, tourists, and writers, the visual imagery of the Clearances extends beyond the art of emigration and therefore also includes paintings of rural labour and landscape. This marks an approach to nineteenth-century Scottish painting that validates the works' significance amidst the wider scope of Victorian art and that establishes their import as depictions of the course of Clearance history within the Highland landscape.

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Chapter I
Introduction

> "Sir, may I take the liberty of asking you two questions with regard to your property in these parts?" "By all means," said he. "Then," continued I, "if you could remove all these small crofters on that slope and place in their room one big farmer, would you do it?" "Certainly," said he, "I could, but I would not; because I wish to be a king of men, not of mountains merely and of moors." "Very well," said I; "this being so, my second question is, supposing you did turn out all these crofters, as we know that certain great proprietors have done, causing no small outcry in the land, would you be a gainer thereby in a pecuniary point of view?" "Not at all," said he, "rather a loser." (Blackie 1872 xliii)

With this short anecdote enfolded in the preface to his 1872 poetic travelogue, *Lays of the Highlands and Islands*, professor, poet, and traveller John Stuart Blackie encapsulated a central debate regarding the use of the Highland landscape during the Clearance era of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[1] The place of tenants and the function of the land had undergone marked shifts during the decades preceding the publication of Blackie's comments, leading to pervasive, fundamental alterations in the appearance and use of the Highland landscape as both a working agricultural environment and an attraction for tourists, writers, poets, and artists. Although Blackie's anecdote belies the gritty reality of the vast demographic and economic changes that swept the Highlands in the Clearance era, his appreciation for the dilemma faced by landlords and tenants at the time offers a strikingly reasoned view of the interactions between social and economic forces that shaped Highland ways of life

[1] John Stuart Blackie (1809-1895), a native of Aberdeen, pursued a successful career as professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh, where he published numerous volumes on poetry, song, and history and also undertook efforts to publicise the need for educational reform, crofters' rights, and the continuing preservation of the Gaelic language. Blackie's interest in Highland culture and landscape led him to endow the newly-established Chair of Celtic at the University, evidence of his close involvement in the development of academic interest in the area. Blackie is still characterised as "one of the best-known Scotsmen of his time" and his funeral in 1895 occasioned a national day of mourning in Scotland, further testament to his prolific and popular public life (www.lib.ed.ac.uk).

throughout the nineteenth century. The remainder of the preface to his poetical volume treats the varying causes and effects of the Clearances, as landlords wrestled with the problem of growing rural distress and "redundant" tenant population. Blackie's rational approach to the economic, social, and political aspects of the topic remains remarkable in its reconciliation of landlord action and estate management within the context of the Clearances and, though Blackie is careful not to place blame squarely on the shoulders of all northern landlords, he is nevertheless anxious to maintain his sympathy for rural Highlanders. In this respect, he touches on the long-lasting and contentious nature of the debate regarding Clearance-era resettlements, emigration, and changing rural labour that has continued to provoke anger and analysis in many contemporary historians.

Although Blackie maintained a strong interest in the land laws and lifeways of the Highlands during the Clearance era, publishing in 1885 an extensive analysis of the economic and legal system that shaped the area, he concludes the Clearance portion of his preface and makes the transition to other, more touristic topics by noting his relief to "be rid of such a slippery subject" as the Clearances (1872 xliv). Moving on to other Highland subjects within the preface, however, allowed Blackie to describe the touristic and poetic intentions that underlay his volume of poems and that illustrate for contemporary readers the contradictions inherent in his characterisation and description of the Highland landscape that inspired his poetry. While Blackie clearly saw within his surroundings evidence of the great changes that influenced settlement patterns in the Highlands, his main purpose in the preface is to enumerate the locales he visited in the area and to describe their prospects and attributes for fellow tourists and travellers. This growing interest in the Highlands as a desirable tourist destination and artistic subject had expanded from the early decades of the nineteenth century, as the writings

of William Gilpin, Sir Walter Scott, and others popularised the image and landscape of Scotland.[2] Blackie's combination of this persistent leisure interest in the area with his poetic ambitions and informed academic background offers an intriguing glimpse into nineteenth-century perspectives on the Highland landscape as a poetic and artistic subject as well as the concurrent Clearance events that shaped the use and appearance of the area. For example, upon visiting Braemar, Blackie recorded his impressions of the surrounding landscape in his 1885 volume on the land laws of the Highlands, noting his own

> tear of sorrow for the misfortunes and maltreatment of our brave Highland people written visibly on the face of that beautiful country. Wherever I turned my foot in my lonely wanderings up the straths and through the glens, I came upon the ruins of cottages where once happy families had dwelt...now...they had all been swept away, leaving nothing behind but dreariness and desolation. (1885 vii)

Blackie was well versed in the subject of Clearance history, having written volumes on the course of Clearance events, the land laws of the Highlands, and the culture and language of Highlanders. However, in the preface to his volume of Highland poetry, Blackie again describes his visit to Braemar and encourages like-minded travellers:

> When there...you may easily scale the peaks of dark Loch-na-Gar—unless the deer stalkers attempt to block your way...or, if you desire a mountain expedition on a larger scale, you will...wind your way through the grand pines of Glen-lui-Beg—a study for Peter Graham or Mr. McWhirter in their best moments. (1872 li)

These two contrasting statements about a single Highland locale precisely convey the disconnect that arose in many nineteenth-century observations of the northern landscape, whether fictional or factual. In the first excerpt, Blackie evinces a

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[2] The writings of these authors and the contemporary interest in Scottish scenery and tourism will be discussed further in Chapter VI.

surprisingly clear-sighted, though certainly romanticised, perspective on the Clearance events that shaped the Braemar landscape and that remained highly visible within the surroundings in the form of abandoned communities and deserted dwellings, relics of rural dispossession and distress. In the second selection, he is nevertheless able to rejoice in the beauty of his remote Highland surroundings and instantly associates his impressions of the mountains with the work of pre-eminent Victorian landscape painters like Peter Graham and John MacWhirter, whose paintings offered audiences similarly dramatic (and often uninhabited) views of the Highlands.[3] These two strands of landscape perspective, while clearly demonstrating the close connection between landscape and Clearance, on the one hand, and the Highlands and painting, on the other, exist simultaneously within the Victorian landscape perspective and add further layers to the investigation into the coincidence of Clearance imagery in nineteenth-century paintings.

While many historians and art historians have inadvertently limited the visual culture of the Clearances to the few best-known images of Highland emigration, such as Thomas Faed's 1865 painting The Last of the Clan, this study aims to illuminate the wider body of works that convey the role of Clearance-era events in the formation of the Highland landscape, both as a working and a visited locale, and consequently relies upon specific and consistent interpretations of the terms that define the time period, namely "Clearance," "Clearance era," and "Highland." As the trends of resettlement, emigration, and shifting rural labour emerged from the economic and social conditions of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century, the legacy of the times grew increasingly evident within the physical environment. This environment is defined as "Highland," a

[3] Remarkably, Blackie also recognises the intrusive presence of deer stalkers and quietly acknowledges the ongoing turn-over of many Highland estates to deer and sporting parks, a shift in land use that grew from the economic conditions of the Clearance era (1872 xxii). This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter VI.

word that can be misleadingly specific in its geographical application. In the case of the Clearances, a term that will be defined and discussed shortly, the Highland region occupies the northern and western areas of the country, from Arran, Bute, and Kintyre in the south to Sutherland in the north as well as the Western Isles and inland regions in Sutherland, Ross, and Inverness. The Clearance-era Highlands also encompass Argyll and Highland Perthshire.[4] These areas remain pivotal in discussions of the Clearances, as the sheep frontier progressed north- and westwards and the crofting landscape formed in the west and on the islands, and also witnessed subsequent changes in settlement and labour that characterised the era. Overall, this extensive area provided the geographical basis for the Clearances and illustrates not only the far-reaching consequences of Clearance-era rural change, but also underlines the varied nature and timescale that characterised the period, issues that will be discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

Furthermore, the reading of geography, history, and art that underpins this thesis rests upon a much wider (and, I would argue, more accurate) view of the Clearances than is usually allowed to the era by historians, academics, and other observers. The term "Clearance" is generally applied to the forced removal, resettlement, or emigration of Highlanders between the second half of the eighteenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century (c. 1760-1850) and frequently bears connotations of significant coercion, distress, and even violence that remains apparent in contemporary applications of the word to Highland history.[5] As a result of this usage, the word itself carries baggage that limits its full denotation of a period of Highland history that encompasses not only the emigration and resettlement events

[4] See Devine 1994 (xiii-xiv) and Richards 2000 (331-333) for detailed maps of the Clearance Highlands.

[5] The scope of the term is illustrated in the titles of works by historians from Mackenzie to Prebble and is consistently used in contemporary studies by Richards, Devine, and Bumsted, among many others. Richards provides a history of its definition and application to the Highlands (2000 5-7).

with which it is frequently equated, but also the changes in rural economy, land use, and landscape that precipitated or grew from shifting Highland populations. In his most recent book, Michael Fry notes this limitation within the terminology and describes the label "clearance" as "convenient shorthand, but misleading if taken to mean a general, coercive depopulation" (222). His comments illuminate a central debate regarding the roles of voluntary and involuntary emigration during the Clearances, which will be discussed later in the thesis, but that nevertheless illuminate the problems and wider ranging connotations included in the word. Along these lines, Eric Richards emphatically states that "the phrase, 'the Highland Clearances', does not account for the sheer diversity of agricultural change in the Highlands, especially from east to west" after remarking that:

> emigration from the Highlands pre-dated the Clearances and much of the later emigration was not directly associated with the Clearances. People would have left the Highlands in any case; the Clearances were a complicating and an accelerating factor. (Richards 2000 313)

The study that Richards builds around this understanding of the term "Clearance" promulgates a multifaceted view of the era and covers emigration, both voluntary and involuntary, and resettlement alongside the concomitant spread of sheep farming, crofting, kelp harvesting, and sporting ventures, a comprehensive view that allows Richards to explore fully the social, economic, and political aspects of the Clearances. Such an inclusive investigation emphasises the diverse nature of the period and amends the frequently narrow associations of the term "Clearances." The use of this term in the body of the following thesis thus comprehends the spectrum of rural change that the Clearances occasioned. In an effort to employ and extend this inclusive perspective on the wide-ranging effects of the Clearances and to include other aspects, like landscape change, I have also employed the term "Clearance era" throughout this study

to denote the rough century, from about 1760 until the mid-1800s, during which the Clearances occurred and to highlight the long-lasting effects of these changes, which extended through the 1880s. This phrase also helps to re-emphasise the full gamut of rural changes that transpired throughout the course of the Clearances.

Due to this close reliance upon past interpretations of the period, the study commences with a brief introduction to the timeline of Clearance events as well as a presentation of the existing historiography, both historical and art historical, and the outstanding areas of academic debate. The following chapters explore the collected body of paintings in terms of the themes that demonstrate the full extent of the Clearance era, such as landlord-tenant relations, changing ways of rural labour, emigration from the Highlands, and the formation of the Highland landscape, and that continuously link the assembled works to the ongoing trends in nineteenth-century British art. Since the vast majority of the following paintings have never yet been examined in the context of the Clearances, a period extensively studied by historians for decades, it is clear that the legacy of the Clearances occupies a far more pervasive and formative position in the physical landscape of the Highlands and the paintings of the area, allowing the collected works from Wilkie to McTaggart to convey the spectrum of implications foisted upon the Highland landscape, both actual and painted, during and well after the Clearance era.

Chapter II
The History and Historiography of the Highland Clearances

As I climb up toward Ben Shiant,
my thoughts are filled with sadness,

seeing the mountain as a wilderness,
with no cultivation on its surface.

As I look down over the pass,
what a chilling view I have!

So many poor cottages in disarray,
in green ruins on each side,

and houses without a roof,
in heaps by the water-spring!

Where the fire and children once were,
that's where the rushes have grown tallest.

Where the heroes used to gather,
behold the white sheep and her lamb there!

But, covetous perpetrator of the evil deed,
[consider] how many families you have removed;

there are orphans in hardship
and widows in poverty because of you;...

Wherever they can find land,
a thousand blessings be on those you evicted.
(Meek 192-193)

These lines from "Climbing Up Towards Ben Shiant," a Gaelic poem composed by Dr. John MacLachlan around 1830, vividly convey the changes within the surrounding Ardnamurchan landscape following the eviction of about twenty-six resident families in 1828 (Meek 58). MacLachlan's attention to such highly visible alterations, including the deserted houses, the bare mountainsides, and the newly omnipresent sheep, and his attendant sorrow at the sudden departure of so many local families illustrate the intimate link between the events of the Clearances and the resulting appearance of the Highland landscape, a relationship that MacLachlan and

many of his contemporary writers, poets, travellers, and painters clearly recognised. The texture, use, and look of Scotland's northern landscape gradually evolved throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as human settlements shifted, economic forces fluctuated, and the artistic and scenic tastes of Victorian Britain developed, shaping a country that became increasingly celebrated for is uninhabited swathes of "wild" mountain lands while at the same time facing pervasive trends of depopulation, famine, and unstable land tenure. Such a contrast within the resulting landscape not only informed the experiences and mindsets of its inhabitants and visitors, but also influenced representations of the area in the painting, poetry, and popular literature of the times. This interplay between the Highland landscape and the transformations of the Clearance era necessarily affected the appearance of the land as well as its expression in the artistic productions that emerged throughout the nineteenth century.

The current-day written history of the Highland Clearances, however, rarely focuses on the full range of repercussions borne by the Highlands throughout the Clearance era, an omission in the literature that remains surprising given the closely interconnected histories of landscape, settlement, and economics. Instead, many contemporary analyses of the Clearance-era Highlands concentrate on discrete aspects of the period, such as the role of emigration or the spread of sheep farming, that led to and grew from the events of the Clearances, the word itself already a limiting term to describe the era and its legacy within the landscape through the outflow of human population.[6] The effect of these focused studies, which certainly contribute to the overall investigation into the variety of causes and effects of the Clearances, nevertheless limits appreciation of the wider spectrum of events and after-effects that

[6] See the introduction above for discussion of this term.

characterised the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Scotland. This thesis aims to expand the existing perspective and consequently relies upon a more generous understanding of the Clearances not just as a series of evictions and emigrations but also as an era that brought fundamental changes to the perception and appearance of the Highland landscape in terms of redrawn settlement patterns, alterations in land use, and changing ways of rural labour that both precipitated and emerged from the Clearance era. While subsequent chapters will deal more closely with the varying aspects of the Clearances and their appearance in paintings, the following outline of the era and the subsequent historical enquiries is offered in an effort to provide suitable background to this wider viewpoint and to illuminate the problems and advantages brought to the topic through the literature. Pursuant to this historical discussion, the available sources for the art history of the period are considered, an investigation that reveals both the need for a wider interpretation of the Clearances and the legacy of the era within the Highland landscape as well as the value of pursuing the area of Clearance imagery in nineteenth-century art.

1. A Concise Historical Outline

The Highland Clearances, which comprised almost a century between the late-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, were a period of widespread social, economic, and political upheaval that brought pervasive changes to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Throughout this era, the Highland populace faced unstable land tenure and shifting economic conditions that precipitated new patterns of landholding, relocation, and emigration, a population shift that has garnered considerable coverage in contemporary historical sources and which sometimes encourages the common conflation of Clearance with emigration, at the expense of other ramifications upon

the land use, settlement, and appearance that shaped the Highlands at the time.[7] While the Clearances consisted neither of a single unified episode of population outflow nor of a uniform geographical distribution, the events of the nineteenth century were nevertheless far-reaching and enduring in their effects, particularly within the perception of the land as it underwent a series of shifts in response to the changing economies and fashions that occurred alongside the Clearances. Consequently, the dispossession, depopulation, and shifting rural lifeways that stemmed from northern landlords' attempts to increase the profitability of their land holdings loomed ominously in the lives of the crofting poor in the Highlands and continues to remain a contentious topic in contemporary interpretations of Scottish history. The prevalence of the sweeping effects of the Clearances throughout the Highlands in combination with the sustained nature of their undertaking produced lasting repercussions on the Highlands as the tenant population faced not only a drastic shift in social and economic relationships, but also confronted the reality of their tenuous occupancy of the land. This habitation and the alterations the tenantry faced in the shifting demographic and economic fortunes of the era enabled the legacy of the Clearances to extend far beyond episodes of resettlement and emigration and to alter fundamentally the conceptual and physical makeup of the Highland landscape.

Beginning in the mid-1740s, with the Jacobite Rebellion and the decisive Battle of Culloden, the social climate of the Scottish Highlands, a stronghold of Jacobite supporters, changed in ways that allowed for the economic and social trends

[7] The nature and extent of this shifting population, whether as relocated tenants or trans-Atlantic migrants, will be discussed throughout the thesis, as will the qualitative and quantitative difficulties encountered by Clearance historians. Richards offers a balanced and well-supported comprehensive view of population change during the Clearance era and shows that population increased in many Highland areas until the 1860s, a trend that often masks regional differences and that can "bedevil a clear understanding of the Clearances" (2000 323). In addressing the question of the total number of Highlanders "directly cleared off the land in various categories of coercion," Richards states that the exact number is unknown, but that "several tens of thousands" of Highlanders departed, voluntarily and involuntarily, from the area (2000 323).

that would facilitate the Clearances in the later decades of that century. While many historians, like Robert Dodgshon and Eric Richards, trace the roots of change to the decades, and even centuries, preceding the '45, the 1746 Battle of Culloden, in which the Jacobite rebels met their final defeat by the crown forces, was the culminating event in the slow disintegration of the clan society and lifeways that had marked the past few centuries of Highland habitation (Richards 2000 40, Hunter 2000 43). The effects of the Jacobite defeat in 1746 were made tangible by the crown's dismantling of Highland society, a move that included the outlawing of "traditional" Highland costume and musical instruments and that also accelerated and enforced "the modernising tendencies already at work in the Highlands" by opening the area to greater economic and political influence from the south (Hunter 2000 43). Clearly, even before the definitive repercussions of Culloden, Highland ways of life and government were shifting focus and moving towards the conditions that would allow for the expanding social and economic forces, which combined to enable alterations within the existing patterns of land tenure and subsistence. These early changes also revealed the newly appreciated value of land as a commodity, which could be employed more effectively to gain economic advantages, and foreshadowed a conceptual shift regarding the use and function of the Highland landscape.

This divisive trend and its concurrent expansion in scope after Culloden was exacerbated by the economic conditions in the later decades of the eighteenth century. During these years, the sharply increasing southern demands for Highland products such as wool, mutton, kelp, cattle, and other commodities helped to develop and amplify northern markets (Richards 1982 192-193). As external demand continued to determine Highland production, clan chiefs, who had historically presided over a cooperative system of agricultural subsistence among their tenants, became more like

landlords in their perceptions and use of the land. Where chiefs had once viewed clan lands as communal property to be worked by members for the benefit of all, they now saw the land as their own private property able to generate increasingly large profits through the output of sheep and cattle products for southern markets (Devine 1994 33, Hunter 2000 45-46, Withers 1998 34-35). While this simple explanation belies the complexity of economic and social forces at work in the Highlands at the time and the wide range of reactions produced across the Highlands, such a profound shift in the function of land nevertheless fundamentally altered the relationship between landlords and their tenant farmers, who had traditionally lived grouped together in small communities.[8] In response to the growing markets and the new uses of the land, some landlords chose to break up these settlements and to redraw boundary lines in order to consolidate individual holdings and to create a more efficient pattern of settlement: the croft (Caird 67). Here again, the physical landscape received deliberate modifications, as estate lines were re-established on a much more geometric scale to reflect the economic interests and plans of the landlord, rather than the more organic division of terrain represented by older ways of working the land. This redefinition of the ground, and the resulting changes in subsistence and rental, which will be discussed below, represented a portentous physical and conceptual reorganisation of the landscape (Hunter 2000 68-71).

The establishment of crofting, a system of land holding that emerged in the western Highlands and Islands around the turn of the nineteenth century, marked the first era of the Clearances, as some tenants were induced to leave their habitual lands and to remove to unfamiliar and less fertile territories.[9] This process, which varied

[8] This shifting land use will be discussed in more detail in Chapters IV and VI.

[9] Both Hunter and Richards cite the expanding sheep frontier and the concomitant rise of the crofting system at the turn of the nineteenth century as a marker of the first earnest phase of the Clearances

widely in timescale and magnitude across the affected areas, often commenced with a landlord's decision to relocate his tenants to marginally productive coastal areas in order to dedicate more land toward pasturage for sheep, an increasingly profitable and non-labour-intensive use of prime land. The boundary lines of the newly established crofting districts were drawn into uniform slivers of property for each crofter (Caird 67). With the exception of the infamous Sutherland Clearances of 1807-1821, which removed between 6,000 and 10,000 inland inhabitants to the coast, this first phase of Clearance generally proceeded slowly, with a few families or a single township facing removal per episode as the sheep farming frontier progressed into the north and islands (Devine 1994 36-37, Richards 2000 184). In 1799, for example, Lord Macdonald, a landlord with holdings on the Isles of Skye and North Uist, commissioned a land surveyor to undertake a study of his holdings and to determine the best use for this land. The surveyor advocated the creation of crofts on Lord Macdonald's estate in the township of Dunskellar in North Uist and explained the strategy to increase Macdonald's profits from his land and tenants:

> If everyone had his separate share of arable land inclosed with a comfortable house built upon it...with a security of enjoying the same for any number of years, it would in a short time give altogether a different turn to the rural economy of the country, by ensuring the possessors in the full enjoyment of their extra labour and improvement, and terminating that careless method of dressing their fields, which now disgraces the husbandry of the Islands. Any convenient number of these settlers might be classed together in one township, having each his own allotment of the arable ground, with a large field behind on the hill for grazing their cows in common. (Caird 69)

Unfortunately, the new crofters, who invariably found themselves situated upon

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(Hunter 2000 49-50, Richards 2000 61). See also Iain Macdonald for a case study of the early sheep farming practises in Glencoe.

substandard agricultural soils, rarely, if ever, fulfilled these optimistic words. Their land, which was generally planted with potatoes, was so thin and insufficient that the new crofters were forced to undertake a variety of other labours, such as raising livestock, fishing, or kelp harvesting, in order to eke out a meagre living (Devine 1994 35, Withers 1998 37).[10] The necessity driving this shift in tenant labour and livelihood remained a prominent feature of the crofting system, designed by landlords to maximise returns from the land (Richards 2000 61-62). Such a re-division of the landscape, and its subsequent adaptation to changing agricultural and demographic needs, reflects the continual interaction between Clearance-era adjustments and the appearance and use of the Highland landscape, a factor of change that persisted throughout the nineteenth century.

Overall, these early phases of Clearance that occurred prior to 1820 consisted of incidents that stemmed from landlords' desires to increase the productivity and profitability of their land by removing the "intruding" small tenant farmers to the newly created crofts. This geographically diffuse trend, while not as vivid an example of Clearance and depopulation as later episodes, was nevertheless crucially important in establishing the precedent for the shifting of rural populations. Although many landlords deplored emigration and the loss of the rural labour force at this time, tenant farmers were clearly no longer guaranteed their historic use of communal lands, as they were cleared in many districts to make room for sheep farms and other for-profit ventures. The social and economic atmosphere that facilitated such dispossession and dislocation was one of markedly changing attitudes toward land use, tenure, and landscape

The subsequent phase of Clearance stemmed from the post-Napoleonic War

[10] See Chapter IV for a discussion of changing types of rural labour throughout the nineteenth century.

recession in the 1820s, when the markets that had sustained the rapid growth of southern demand for Highland products, such as kelp and fish, faltered, leaving the north of Scotland suffering from the economic slowdown. However, "even more ominously, though sheep prices stagnated they did not experience the collapse of other commodities and it looked as if only commercial pastoralism, with all its implications for Clearance and dispossession, had a real future" (Devine 1994 52). As a consequence of these shifts in market pressures, northern landlords once again considered other land use options in their efforts to weather the recession successfully and profitably. With a large portion of crofters in coastal areas suffering from the collapse of the marine products markets, a sector that had provided this impoverished class with essential income, some landlords chose to remove this "redundant" population in favour of clearing more land for sheep pasturage, the only Highland product that still offered substantial returns. Since displacement to other areas would have merely shifted the problem of the excess population, some landlords opted instead for programmes of evictions followed by assisted emigration to the North American colonies (Devine 1994 55-56, Richards 2000 184-191). This trend defined a momentous shift from local displacement to trans-Atlantic emigration, a process that marked the commencement of a slow, but persistent, attrition of population from the Highlands and that heralded a new view of emigration as a solution to rural poverty and distress.[11] Again, however, the scale and timing of such events varied across the affected areas and did not occur simultaneously or with the same consequences. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V, the role of emigration within the Clearances has generated an ongoing debate within the literature and, as such, occupies a multifaceted position in the history of the Clearances. The scenes of

[11] This fundamental shift in land owners' view of emigration will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V.

emigration and the shift in population these entailed nevertheless exerted a formative impact upon the habitation and subsequent use of the Highland landscape.

The recession-induced economic crisis that prompted this phase of Clearance and emigration also altered the nature of land tenure and landlordism in the Highlands by placing more northern lands into the hands of wealthy buyers from the south. As the effects of the 1820 recession continued into the '30s and early '40s, many native landlords faced financial troubles stemming from the inability of their impoverished tenants to maintain rent payments and from the decreasing value of the land as a producer of high-priced market goods. The subsequent declarations of bankruptcy on many Highland estates led to their division and sale to well-off outside buyers (Richards 1982 221, Withers 1998 44). Indeed, this transfer of property was sufficiently common in this era to merit only passing reference in newspapers, such as the Inverness *Courier*, which duly reported sales of previously long-held clan lands. For example, on 8 November 1843, the entire Inner Hebridean island of Raasay, the property of the MacLeods of Raasay for the duration of the preceding five centuries, was sold at auction to a Lowland gentleman (Barron 36). The purchase of Raasay, as well as the numerous other sales like it, initiated a shift in the ownership of northern lands as they began to fall under the stewardship of individuals who brought an increasingly profit-oriented style of proprietorship to the estates, unlike earlier landlords who may still have possessed historic ties to the lands and inhabitants. These new landlords, with their stores of wealth as capital, did not need the relatively low profits from the rents of their tenants and could afford to pursue other less troublesome land use options, such as sheep farming and deer hunting, again evidence of the ongoing refocusing efforts that shaped land use within an ever-changing Highland landscape. This trend received further stimulus as British taste had recently

turned toward the appreciation of remote Highland scenery, a trend precipitated in earlier decades by the writings of Sir Walter Scott, among others, influencing southern gentlemen to purchase northern properties at a time when the possession of such an estate for sporting and other outdoor ventures had become quite stylish (Devine 1994 73-77, Gaskell vii). Finally, the establishment of new landlords on old Highland estates also changed the nature of all future Clearances as the trend toward assisted emigration could fully develop with the surplus wealth held by the new proprietors.[12] These landlords could now afford to underwrite their tenants' removal from the land.

This ability factored into the subsequent phases of Clearance that occurred as a corollary of the crofting population's increased impoverishment during the potato famines of the 1840s. The blight, caused by the bacteria *Phytophthora infestans*, spread rapidly through the Highlands and Islands, completely obliterating the potato crops of most crofters and small farmers in 1846 (Devine 1988 33-35). While not as disastrous as the concurrent famine events in Ireland, the potato blight nevertheless severely affected many areas, especially the Hebrides and other western islands, whose inhabitants had increasingly relied upon the potato as an important part of their agricultural harvest and as a mainstay of their diet. This over dependence on a single crop stemmed from the potato plant's ease of cultivation on the relatively poor agricultural land of the coastal crofters (Symonds 206). However, with the failure of the crop, the population of these areas faced the spectre of famine, along with the insecurity of their tenure on the land, in an already impoverished material culture.

As conditions in the British Isles worsened, the plight of the crofters during the 1840s was discussed frequently, and often heatedly, by outside observers who

[12] See Richards 2000 (207-225) for a related discussion of the role and action of landlord John Gordon of Cluny and his infamous famine-era Clearance efforts on Barra and the Uists.

debated the need for various intervention and relief measures. Should landlords be forced to provide grain and other necessary supplies for the tenant crofters? Or, was the government responsible for such actions? In the midst of these political discussions, a number of private relief agencies sprang up to aid the starving poor in both Ireland and northern Scotland. Newspapers, such as the *Illustrated London News*, printed regular columns reporting on the current conditions in Ireland as well as on the slightly better situation of the Scottish crofters. These articles, which described the nature of the crop failure, the ensuing food riots, and the large numbers of unreported deaths, also encouraged the monetary involvement of concerned individuals by printing the amounts of relief money donated by well-known personalities, such as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert (ILN 1847 vol. 1). Despite these generous donations for Highland assistance, the starving crofters of the 1840s remained a pressing problem for the new class of wealthy landlords, who were faced with a tenantry that could neither pay rent nor support themselves. In response, many landlords devised ways to rid themselves of the starving excess population by evicting and emigrating large groups of tenants. Some landlords employed a variety of techniques, including coercion, confiscation, and brute force, to expel tenants from their land while others arranged schemes of assisted emigration to clear the area for the still-profitable sheep farms as well as for the increasingly popular deer parks for sportsmen.[13] This trend ballooned into the most visible and extensive phase of Clearance, as more than 16,000 people emigrated, both voluntarily and involuntarily, to Canada and Australia during the decade following the initial potato famine in 1846 (Devine 1994 187). This ongoing outward movement, which, like the previous episodes of demographic shifts, occurred slowly and on a localised basis, held far-

[13] See Chapter VI for paintings of sporting estates.

reaching implications for the texture of Highland habitation from mid-century onward. The issue of emigration within the Clearance era consequently remains a hotly debated topic as it exerted such a formative force upon the landscape that is often still visible today.

Although major Clearances and enforced emigration became less common with the end of the famine years, the remaining crofters in the Highlands were nevertheless faced with looming uncertainty over the security of their tenure on the land. The resettlements and emigrations of the preceding decades had unquestionably left a sense of instability in the lives of Highland crofters and in their relationship with their local landlord. As a result of this continuous insecurity and the decades of landlord abuse of tenant land rights, crofters began more actively to vocalise their frustrations and grievances during the 1870s and '80s. While limited resistance of a more covert nature, such as "foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth," had been occurring in oppressed areas since the beginnings of the Clearances, during the later decades of the nineteenth century, larger-scale riots and incendiary literature began to crop up and spread throughout the Highlands (Symonds 112). With the publication of new propagandistic pro-crofter literature, like *The Highlander* magazine and Alexander Mackenzie's 1883 *A History of the Highland Clearances*, in combination with the increasing coverage of crofting conditions in the mainstream British press, the question of how to ameliorate the deplorable social and political problems in the Highlands arose and became a central debate (Devine 1994 223-225). This debate grew increasingly urgent during various crofters' riots of the 1880s and was finally settled from the standpoint of the government after a number of investigatory commissions and land leagues were formed in the years leading up to the passage of

the Crofting Act in 1886.[14] This act provided secure land tenure for crofters, but was still so far from satisfying the crofting population that many violent and highly publicised riots occurred in the years following its passage. Despite these protests, the Act remained in place and eventually became grudgingly accepted in the Highlands (Devine 1994 231-232). It remains, however, a contentious topic in modern-day discussions over the relationship, both social and legal, between crofters and their land, emphasising the continual connection between the Clearance era and the Highland landscape.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, therefore, the northern and western portions of Scotland faced an era of intense redefinition of Highland landscape, land tenure, and land use. As a result of changing economic conditions in distant southern markets, the land, which had previously been defined for the communal use and benefit of communities, became increasingly employed as private, profit-producing property. While many landlords became more invested in the process of augmenting the profits from their estates, their tenant farmers were often pushed to marginal coastal lands in order to clear the most valuable portions for the increasingly profitable sheep farms. After the sharp shift in market conditions in the 1820s, both native landlords and tenants found themselves in economically strapped conditions, a state that led to the transfer of Highland estates to southern elites who could afford to resettle large groups of "redundant" crofters. This trend worsened during the years of the potato famine and led to the most visible and painful episodes of enforced emigration in the 1840s and later. The riotous events and publications of the 1880s subsequently helped to secure crofters' land tenure and protection from the wilful actions of landlords. However, the preceding century of instability and

[14] See Cameron and Grigor for further discussion of this period of crofter resistance.

Clearance had left a deep impression on the north of Scotland as the increasingly deserted Highland landscape, with its ruins of croft houses and potato beds, expressed decades of social, economic, and demographic change.

2. Historiography

As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, modern historians of this period of Scottish history, despite their heated academic debates in a wide variety of historical studies treating the causes, extent, and results of the Clearances, often focus on specific aspects of the era, like the character of emigration or the spread of sheep farming, thereby downplaying the wide range of rural changes encompassed by the Clearance era. Paintings of the Highlands during this time period, however, offer insight into the spectrum of Clearance-induced effects and into the ways in which artists mediated artistic sensibilities and trends in terms of the Highland landscape, and vice versa. Since the approach to this topic, and to the compilation of relevant paintings, is complicated by the diversity of historical sources and the relative paucity of directly pertinent art historical sources, I have identified three primary areas of material enquiry, which include historical studies of the Clearances, art historical texts, monographs, and primary sources on Scottish paintings and artists, and other germane writings in the fields of landscape studies, environmental history, and geography.

Taken together, the three areas provide a range of perspectives on the Highlands during the Clearance era and the concurrent Victorian interest in Highland scenery. There are, however, a variety of problems and debates surrounding the use of each type of source. For instance, as demonstrated above, the great number of modern analyses of the Clearances and the era's attendant economic, political, and social currents provide a wealth of data and a wide range of interpretations about the

actions of both landlords and tenants, but often lead to contentious debates on the relative culpability of landlords, economic factors, and tenant destitution and frequently fail to consider the full range of available primary sources. Art historical studies of Scottish painting provide solid introductions into the history of the arts in Scotland as well as more detailed investigations into the lives and works of pre-eminent Scottish painters. There are gaps in the arts sources, however, most notably surrounding paintings of emigration and landscape change, themes that have been heavily discussed in volumes on Scottish history, but that have been less visible in the art historical literature until recently. Other available writings in the related fields of landscape studies, environmental history, and geography frequently afford highly relevant insights into the current study through the skilled use of interdisciplinary frameworks that combine a variety of analysis techniques and source material to inform readings of the interactions between landscape and history.

a. Historical Sources

The most accessible and widest array of existing work in the subject area of this study comprises historical studies of the Clearances and the primary sources, including Royal Commission reports and estate documents, upon which they draw. Contemporary historians like James Hunter, Eric Richards, and T.M. Devine provide a collection of popular and academic perspectives on the Clearance era while other researchers like Donald Meek and Krisztina Fenyo highlight the wider range of methodologies and source material that continues to illuminate understanding of settlement, land use, and landscape in the Highlands. Implicit within such an extensive and continually expanding group of analyses on the Clearances is the understanding that each study or historian may employ divergent techniques and sources within the same subject area, thereby multiplying the historical perspectives

and problems of the field. Although this trend tends to polarise the academic community and its popular audience within an already contentious and emotive field, it nevertheless also adds to the scope of available materials and fosters invigorating debate regarding the interpretation of historical evidence and the application of this evidence to examinations of the era.

In the new introduction to the latest edition of his groundbreaking 1976 study on the Highland Clearances and the ensuing struggle for land reform, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, historian James Hunter wrestles with these issues and emphatically re-locates his work within the recent historiography of the nineteenth-century Highlands. He describes the academic climate against which his study emerged as one that favoured a strictly unemotional and impersonal approach to the events of the Clearances, allowing historians like Malcolm Gray, Philip Gaskell, and others to focus on economic and political factors as the driving forces behind the depopulation of the era rather than encouraging them to consider the role of people, community, and landscape within this context. According to Hunter, these initial studies almost uniformly tended to exculpate the landlords by attributing the pervasive trends of depopulation and shifts in land use to impersonal forces of supply and demand, a common theme that prompted his desire to undertake a study of the role of the crofters and the development of their community consciousness throughout the course of the Clearances (2000 3). The work that emerged from this aim, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, offers a powerfully argued bottom-up approach to the Clearances alongside a presentation of crofters as victims of landlord-enforced resettlements and evictions and a discussion of their active part in cultivating a group identity and in procuring stability of tenure as a result of the Clearances. Through this publication and others, Hunter has gained both recognition and censure for his

unprecedented discussion of the people and communities involved in the Clearances as well as his unabashed blame of the landlords as agents of Clearance while also receiving pointed criticism for his perceived alignment with a more popular, simplistic, and emotional view of the Clearances and his use of vernacular sources.

On the other side of the methodological spectrum and in contrast to Hunter's works, the comprehensive and methodical researches of fellow historian Eric Richards in *The Highland Clearances* and other earlier works overtly occupy a comparatively more academic place within recent writings on the Clearances. Like Hunter, Richards recognises the highly emotive character of the Clearances as well as the resulting controversial nature of Clearance research and the easy extension of the subject into the realm of melodrama and enduring rage and resentment.[15] However, Richards pointedly acknowledges his desire to analyse the events and circumstances of the Clearances "as directly as the historical evidence allows" and to remain expressly within the sphere of available nineteenth-century documentation, leaving no room for the ubiquitous melodramatic popular perception of the era (Richards 2000 x). The view of the Clearances that emerges throughout his research is one that, while neither denying nor diminishing "the essential tragedy" of the resettlements, emigrations, and evictions, nevertheless includes landlords and estate factors within the overarching economic and social contexts of the era, thereby highlighting the dilemmas faced by the landowning class as well as the full range of their varied reactions to the conditions of the times (Richards 2000 x). Richards' heavy and rational reliance on primary source materials, including estate records and letters, and his analysis of the complex interactions between the economic, demographic, and environmental forces that enveloped rich and poor inhabitants of the Highlands during

[15] R.H. Campbell also notes the prevalence of these emotions in driving the persistent historical focus on Highland agricultural and economic history, often overshadowing the issue of landownership and the course of farming in other parts of Scotland (58-59).

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provide a balanced and well-documented portrayal of the Clearances and their role within Highland history.

The palpable tension that exists between the works of Hunter and Richards, and others of their colleagues, illuminates the major rifts that continue to arise and spark debate within the current analyses of the Clearances. For example, as is evident in Hunter's new introduction, discussions of the degree of culpability, the assignment of blame, and the place for sympathy frequently and contentiously arise in the historical literature, often clouding the subsequent findings and diverting attention from other Clearance-related sources and issues that deserve further research.[16] The debate surrounding the use of vernacular or non-written sources, such as poetry, song, narrative, painting, and landscape observation, in addition to the more frequently employed statistics, policies, and governmental commission reports, occupies an additional area of discord in contemporary discussions of the Clearances. Fears of over-emotionalising or romanticising the Clearances plague the use of poetry as historical artefact, but the imbalance between the few indigenous accounts of the Clearances and the many landlord records of the era requires the examination of such sources (Richards 2000 xi). Indeed, as will be discussed later in the thesis, Gaelic poetry offers a singularly insightful glimpse into the indigenous response to Clearance and, in its contrast to English-language poetry and paintings of the period, which both convey outsiders' perspectives on the Clearance-era Highlands, illuminates more fully the scope of Highland reaction to the shifting rural atmosphere of the times. This inclusion of "new" forms of evidence from sources as widely varied as poetry and painting significantly widens the scope of historical study and greatly enhances historians' involvement with and analysis of the period in question.

[16] Such debated topics, which include the issue of voluntary and involuntary emigration, among other subjects, will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters as they relate to the assembled paintings.

The value of utilising a wider range of materials and successfully integrating the resultant findings into well-researched academic studies of the Clearances is clearly evident in a number of recent publications. For her 2000 book, *Contempt, Sympathy, and Romance: Lowland Perceptions of the Highlands and the Clearances During the Famine Years, 1845-1855*, historian Krisztina Fenyo assiduously compiled and analysed hundreds of newspaper stories, reports, and opinion pieces treating the variety of Lowland responses to the condition of the Highlanders during the mid-nineteenth century. The resulting publication discusses these responses within Fenyo's three-category framework, which includes feelings of contempt, sympathy, and romance for the destitute Highlanders, and provides a crucial new angle on the Clearances from the perspective of external journalistic observers and activists as well as indigenous advocates. Her work with these previously unexplored materials not only firmly asserts the value of an expanded critical scope when examining the nineteenth-century Highlands, or indeed any other area of historical research, but also illuminates the latent possibilities that exist within other under-utilised source materials. This potentiality is perhaps even more strikingly evident in Donald Meek's 1995 work *Tuath is Tighearna: Tenants and Landlords*, a meticulously edited and translated compilation of nineteenth-century Gaelic poems on the varied repercussions of the Clearances upon Highland society and landscape. The collection of poetry, which spans the nineteenth century and covers topics from sheep farming to politics, vividly illuminates indigenous reactions to the Clearances and the subsequent land reforms and marks the first concerted effort to reintroduce these responses to the academic literature. As Meek notes in the introduction to his volume, the intimate link between Highland society and Gaelic oral and poetic traditions lends particular weight to these poems as indigenous commentaries on the course of events in the

Highlands and enhances their value as part of the very limited body of native responses to the Clearances (Meek 10). Consequently, the inclusion of an ampler scope of sources and the use of previously undervalued materials, along with the unconventional methods required to gain access to these new sources of oral or printed commentary, mark an increasingly fruitful avenue for the attainment of new insight into nineteenth-century Highland history.

A final means to gain further understanding of the course of the Clearances within the Highlands is the use of landscape observation, an area that is notably under-represented in the historical accounts. James Hunter recognised the prominent disconnect between historians' accounts of Highland history and the actual landscape upon which such events occurred, asking, "Why do Scotland's historians, living and working in a country where nowhere is more than a few hours from anywhere else, so neglect...'the archive of the feet'?" (Hunter 2000 4). With this observation, Hunter acutely pinpoints the necessity of environmental observation in the support of historical studies of the recent past, while also stating that much information, especially regarding evictions, resettlements, and alterations in land use and division, can be gleaned from the Highland landscape. He emphasises this point and its potential value to the academic community in his 1995 work *On the Other Side of Sorrow: Nature and People in the Scottish Highlands*, a study that emphatically links the history of the Highlands with the changing appearance, use, and perception of the landscape. Throughout the volume, Hunter traces the development and evolution of landscape awareness within both the native Gaelic community and the legions of writers, artists, and tourists who later popularised the area, noting that these groups' divergent relationships to the environment and their resulting literary and artistic productions shed light onto the interplay between historical events and the physical

landscape. Perhaps the most vivid application of these interactions and their effect on the appearance of the landscape occurs in Hunter's analysis of historical documents alongside his observation of specific locales still full of the abandoned homes of evicted residents to strengthen his reading of the historical record. Clearly, this observation of Highland surroundings within historical research plays an enlightening, but heretofore under-appreciated, role in the exploration of Clearance history.

The extensive range of available historical studies on the Clearances serves as an informative and substantial foundation for research into the paintings of the era. While contemporary investigations into the causes, extent, and effects of the Clearances rely upon the shared resources of economic statistics, governmental reports, and other historical documents, all of which communicate the points of view of the landlords and their agents, some newer studies delve into the previously under-utilised areas of newspaper stories, eyewitness reports, and poetry, sources which can convey the attitudes and experiences of the native Highlanders during the Clearance era. The use of these materials within academic researches, and the debates that such publications continue to engender, highlight the ongoing rifts within the field concerning the place for blame, sympathy, and community within the historical research of the Clearances.

b. Art Historical Sources

In contrast to the wide array of available sources on the history of the Highland Clearances, the art historical writings on the topic are comparatively limited, leaving the bulk of related materials within the general categories of Scottish art history surveys, monographs on leading Victorian artists, and nineteenth-century art magazines, tourist guides, and other illustrated publications. Logically, the most useful and applicable art historical sources are the paintings themselves, but the

majority of these had not yet been collected or analysed as a group and the few paintings that have been recognised as iconic images of the Clearances have only received fleeting examination in the context of the artists' careers or the course of Victorian art, which is a surprising fact given the potency of the paintings as symbols of the Clearances and the continuing popularity of the Highlands as a subject for painters. Despite this dearth of study, there are many relevant nineteenth-century paintings that deal with the events and effects of the Clearances upon Highlanders and their landscape and that, like the accompanying primary and secondary sources, rely upon a creative and inclusive approach to the era to highlight their relevance. The resulting body of literature and paintings is consequently very diverse and reflects the wide-ranging and multi-disciplinary nature of the topic.

A number of surveys on the course of Scottish art history provide a solid initial foray into the art historical context of the nineteenth-century paintings of the Clearances. For example, *Scottish Art: 1460-1990* by Duncan MacMillan, *Scottish Painting: 1837-1939* by William Hardie, and David and Francina Irwin's *Scottish Painters at Home and Abroad: 1700-1900* are three of the general texts that present the primary figures and paintings of Scottish art in a chronological perspective and that highlight the major trends and events of the era. While MacMillan's work features the most generous time span and the widest cast of artists and images, the other two works offer a more focused glimpse into the visual arts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thereby furnishing a slightly more detailed view of the influences and interactions that shaped the artistic production emerging from Scotland's arts communities, both nationally and internationally. Due to the survey nature of these sources, however, they can offer little more than an introduction to the main figures and events of the period rather than a detailed and multi-faceted account

of relevant Clearance-era works. They are nonetheless valuable resources that provide concise studies of specifically Scottish painting, an aspect of British art that does not often garner sufficient coverage in other general surveys of Victorian art which frequently highlight only a few token painters of Scotland, like Horatio McCulloch and Thomas Faed, and their role in the London arts community.[17] In contrast, the surveys by MacMillan, Hardie, and the Irwins lend greater centrality to the discussion of Scottish painting in Scotland and within wider international circles, presenting a more complete and freestanding overview of the subject.

A more nuanced approach to the subject of national identity in Scottish paintings can be found John Morrison's recent publication, *Painting the Nation: Identity and Nationalism in Scottish Painting, 1800-1920*, a detailed study that outlines the development of Scottish art within both British and Scottish artistic and national contexts. The work begins with a description of Horatio McCulloch's Glencoe (1864) and its well-known portrayal of deer within a deserted Highland "wilderness" and then poses the "interesting and puzzling" question about "why the Scots, who were then in an unprecedented paroxysm of industrial and urban development, should have embraced empty desolation as a national defining image" (Morrison 2003 1). This issue serves as the basis for Morrison's subsequent discussions of Scottish painting, from genre to history to landscapes, and the parallel development of interest in the picturesque, romantic Highlandism, and other themes of nationalism that became apparent in the works of art. Among other topics, the resulting study offers a particularly insightful account of the development of interest in Highland scenery and Highlandism during the nineteenth century. Morrison also briefly links the painted description of the deserted landscape in McCulloch's work,

[17] See, for example, Reynolds (151), Treuherz 1993 (9, 28,65, 192), and Lambourne (119, 210).

as well as a few other paintings of rural labour and landscape in the Highlands, to the long-lasting legacy of the Clearances and the era's associated economic, demographic, and agricultural changes (Morrison 2003 108-110).[18] A slightly later contribution to *A Shared Legacy: Essays in Irish and Scottish Art and Visual Culture* of 2005 takes this perspective further and notes that the presence of sheep and deer within paintings forges a direct, if understated, link to the lasting legacy of the Clearance era within the Highland landscape (102-106). In this essay, "Highlandism and Scottish Identity," Morrison explicitly discusses the settlement alterations and changes in land use that characterised the Clearance era as well as the subsequent appearance of these alterations within some of the paintings of the period, all towards his greater argument regarding the development of a distinctly "Highlandist" attitude in Victorian paintings of Scotland. *Painting the Nation* and Morrison's later essay consequently offer a valuable and much more detailed study of the art of a specific historical era and also begin to create links between Clearance-era history and painting, an attribute that is notable in its contrast to the aforementioned general surveys of Scottish art.

Another publication dealing with two centuries of Scottish art history also presents the major personalities and paintings within the framework of the development of the Scottish landscape as a subject for artists, a theme that is closely linked to the role of the Clearance-era Highlands within the arts of the nineteenth-century. James Holloway and Lindsay Errington's *The Discovery of Scotland: The Appreciation of Scottish Scenery through Two Centuries of Painting* is the sole survey text that thematically traces the evolving role of the landscape, both Highland and Lowland, as it became an increasingly popular subject for Scottish and other painters

[18] The appearance in nineteenth-century paintings of such scenes of empty landscape, as I will argue throughout this thesis, relates as much to the shifting land use and settlement of the nineteenth century as to the concurrent evolution of artistic interest in Highland scenery.

of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The book arrived amidst growing interest in the development of landscape painting in Britain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a development that gained momentum from exhibitions and publications like the Tate Gallery's landmark *Landscape in Britain, c. 1750-1850* and Leslie Parris' slightly later *Landscape in Britain 1850-1950*. Unlike these two more general surveys, however, Holloway and Errington present their material in terms of specific locales within Scotland, such as the emotive Falls of Clyde and the Highland lochs and mountains, while also emphasising the links between the arts and the expanding literary and scientific appreciation of the landscape, as expressed in the writings of William Gilpin, Sir Walter Scott, and John Ruskin, among others. Furthermore, the authors of *The Discovery of Scotland* discuss the development of an environmental perspective on the Highlands and demonstrate the changing use and perception of that landscape as transportation and tourism altered its appearance, an aspect of the book that effectively underpins the subject of my study. Unlike many other publications treating the rise of Victorian landscape painting through the nineteenth-century, which too frequently either dismiss the Highland landscape altogether or discuss it only in terms of picturesque and, later, romantic landscape, Holloway and Errington offer a geographically specific discussion of the wide range of scenery in Scotland and its function within landscape painting. Their detailed presentation of the development of interest in the Highlands contrasts sharply with the perfunctory references to Highland landscapes in other Victorian art surveys, including Treuherz's single mention of McCulloch (1993 65, 28-30) as well as Lambourne's and Maas' equally abrupt references to the subject of Highland scenery

as depicted by Landseer (Lambourne 119, 210; Maas 52-53), an English painter who depicted Highland life and landscape for a London audience.[19]

In addition to the aforementioned general surveys on Scottish art and landscape, there are many in-depth monographs and exhibition catalogues that afford supplementary details on the careers and paintings of individual artists as well as valuable examples of structure and methodology. The work of Lindsay Errington on the lives of renowned Scottish painters, such as William McTaggart and Sir David Wilkie, provides key information about each artist's body of work alongside the specifics of his biography, education, influences, and career choices. Related publications tracing the lives and works of Horatio McCulloch, the Faed brothers, and many others, offer additional perspectives that support and inform analyses of each artist's paintings. Catalogues from galleries and exhibitions presenting a selection of paintings or the works of individual artists also serve a similar purpose in the collection of applicable materials and methodologies. For example, the comprehensive catalogues from the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and civic museums in Aberdeen and Dundee, among others, offer titles, descriptions, technical data, exhibition history, and, occasionally, illustrations of works from the permanent collections of each institution. These publications as well as the compilations of exhibition records from the Royal Academy, the Royal Scottish Academy, and the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts provide access to extensive listings of paintings that afford both a glimpse into the nineteenth-century art historical context and a means to identify relevant paintings. Within current exhibition catalogues, the assembled paintings and essays in Malcolm Maclean and Christopher Carrell's *As an Fhearann/From the Land*, the sole source dealing directly with a few

[19] This dearth of analysis will be discussed further in Chapter VI

nineteenth-century paintings of emigration within the context of the Clearances, trace the relationship between artists and the reproduction of the Highland landscape throughout the past two centuries and provide a wealth of visual and literary information. Additionally, though far more obliquely, Pamela Belanger's essays in *Inventing Acadia: Artists and Tourists at Mount Desert* deal with artistic representations of the nineteenth-century landscape perspectives that led to the physical and ideological development of national parks in the United States.[20] While the included paintings and artists are not directly relevant to this study, the methodology presented in the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue provides an instructive model for the use of paintings as sources in the study of the landscape history and identity.

Many of the aforementioned monographs and exhibition catalogues rely upon a close reading of available primary sources, such as nineteenth-century art magazines, illustrated newspapers, tourist guides, and other art-related publications, which afford a direct link to the events and atmosphere of the Victorian art world. As a publication spanning decades of the nineteenth century, the *Art Journal* supplies a comprehensive view of the major exhibitions, ideological debates, and current events that shaped the arts communities of the nation. Although focusing primarily on London, the magazine nevertheless details the happenings of the Royal Scottish Academy and the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts and also illuminates the national and international trends that exerted influence on British art in the nineteenth century. Its regular reviews of the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy and the accompanying lists of paintings included in the show are instrumental in the establishment of critical context and in the identification of Clearance- and Highland-

[20] See also Johns for another example of a comparative landscape study.

related works. Other essential primary sources include illustrated periodicals, like the *Illustrated London News*, which directly link visual culture to current events; tourist and artist travel guides, which demonstrate popular use and perception of the landscape as both a tourist destination and a subject for painting; and artist memoirs, writings, and biographies, which supply personal commentary on each artist's works and career.

The final component of the available art historical source material for this project comprises a variety of highly relevant studies that afford the means to explore and compare related material and methodologies. These sources include publications that deal with the manifestation of social themes within Victorian paintings, such as Julian Treuherz's exhibition catalogue entitled *Hard Times: Social Realism in Victorian Art*, as well as works that provide a valuable framework for the analysis of landscapes, like *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730-1840* by John Barrell, and rural genre paintings, like Christiana Payne's *Rustic Simplicity*. Treuherz's work along with other analogous studies, including T.J. Clark's extensive examination of Courbet's realist works from the 1840s and '50s, an article on Victorian paintings of emigration by Susan P. Casteras, and Howard D. Rodee's thesis on related depictions of poverty and dispossession, offer focused examinations of the themes of poverty and labour, and the political implications of these themes, within nineteenth-century art. Treuherz's work, like the others mentioned above, not only supplies an overview of the pertinent paintings but also provides a thorough discussion of the appearance, use, and reception of these social themes within the British art scene. While not directly referencing the Highland Clearances, these sources nevertheless overlap with the themes of emigration, poverty, and rural labour that characterise many paintings of the

Clearances. Alternatively, within the landscape mode, John Barrell's groundbreaking work investigates the environmental perspectives inherent in three renowned artists' interpretations of the English countryside and its rural inhabitants. The resulting discussion of the prevailing perception of poverty, its portrayal in paintings, and the function of the landscape as a foil for this depiction illuminates the changeable role of the physical environment in the representation of scenes of rural life. This book was symptomatic of a fundamental change in the approach of art historians to landscape painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in which the socio-economic context of property-owning, class relations, and the use of the land became equally important areas of interpretation as art theory, artists' own writings, and the much discussed relation between landscape art and pastoral poetry.[21] Ann Bermingham's *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860* likewise offers an insightful examination of the intersection between the emergence of landscape painting in the eighteenth century with the coincidental evolution of enclosure and economic reform within the English countryside, an interaction that informs the resulting study of landscape paintings as artists alternately reflected and elided their socio-historical context through the mid-nineteenth century. The role of landscape in painting is further discussed in Barbara Novak's *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting, 1825-1875*, a work that probes the interactions between the natural environment, artists' representations of that landscape, and the development of a national consciousness during the nineteenth century and that also touches on the issues inherent in the use of landscape paintings as objects of cultural meaning. Although dealing with American art, Novak's study, like the work of Barrell and Bermingham, offers valuable insight into the ways in which landscape within

[21] See also Solkin, Rosenthal, and Green for further investigations into landscape painting, audience, and nature.

paintings may be read as a statement of the prevailing environmental and artistic perspectives of the times.

Unlike the wide range of historical publications on the subject of the Clearances, the existing body of art historical literature concerning the artistic production of nineteenth-century Scotland is comparatively limited and, until the recent appearance of Morrison's work, the literature has failed to assess Scottish landscape painting within the groundbreaking approaches heralded by Barrell, Bermingham, and others in their work on the English landscape tradition. As a result of this time lag in the scholarship, the available surveys on the course of Scottish art history offer useful, but general, accounts of the activities and events of the arts communities in the country and are greatly enhanced through additional readings of monographs and exhibition catalogues. Nineteenth-century art magazines and other illustrated publications and guides supply valuable insight into the context of the Victorian art world and are instrumental in the identification of relevant works of art and their critical reception at major exhibitions. Finally, the works of art historians like John Barrell and Barbara Novak offer crucial theoretical frameworks for the analysis of paintings as depictions of landscape change and awareness, both essential elements in the investigation of the role of land and landscape within paintings of the Clearances.

c. Other Sources

Outside the realms of historical and art historical sources, there are numerous other publications in the fields of landscape studies, environmental history, and the sciences that illuminate and fulfil the interdisciplinary nature of this topic by providing a wider variety of approaches to the material. Discussions of symbols and meanings within the landscape, its boundaries, and artistic representations

characterise the works of Denis Cosgrove, D.W. Meinig, and Anne Whiston Spirn while approaches to the history visible within the land and its ecology anchor the studies by environmental historians and geographers like David Turnock, Robert Dodgshon, and Charles W.J. Withers. The use of such sources underlines the centrality of the land and landscape to the Clearances and furnishes new frameworks through which to examine the art historical evidence.

The interdisciplinary researches of historians Cosgrove, Meinig, and Spirn investigate the ways in which landscape, and artistic and literary representations of that landscape, can provide visual clues about the symbolic and physical function of the land. For example, Cosgrove, in his own work and his editorial selections in collections of essays, muses on the mediating role of the observer in the re-creation of landscapes in painting, literature, and poetry and concurrently furnishes thoughtful analysis of the relationship between the physical appearance of the land and the actions of both active insiders and external observers. Likewise, Meinig contemplates the creation and re-creation of landscapes by observers alongside their perceptions of the historical forces and cultural associations that shape the environment. Finally, landscape architect Spirn discusses landscape as literature that can be both read and written to reflect the deeply embedded meanings that inhabit the land. Despite the wide-ranging geographical and methodological themes within these studies, all three authors offer key insights into the various ways in which symbolism, ideology, and history are inserted and extracted from the landscape. The resulting interpretations of the environment and the way it may be read to inform understandings of its function are crucial to the analysis of the effects of the Clearances upon the Highland landscape and its subsequent depiction by artists.

A final component of the additional source material pertinent to this project comprises accounts of environmental history, at times ecological, geographical, and ideological, as represented in the works of geographers and historians like Turnock, Dodgshon, and Withers. Turnock's investigations of the development patterns that shaped the use and appearance of Scottish geography link geographical data and observation with historical documents and effectively illuminate the forces behind the physical creation of the landscape. Additionally, in *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, c. 1493-1820*, human geographer and historian Robert Dodgshon comprehensively discusses the role of environmental conditions within the evolution of Highland clan society and presents a highly detailed analysis of the social, political, and economic conditions throughout the centuries leading up to the Clearance era. Dodgshon's anchoring geographical perspective and his meticulous analysis of Highland estate records and land use amply support his account of the slow but persistent economic forces that transformed social relationships and land use in the Highlands. On a more ideological level, Withers' work in *Geography, Science, and National Identity: Scotland Since 1520* argues in support of the development of a historical geography of Scotland, a field that he proceeds to show would illuminate the ways geographical knowledge was and is used to shape the space and national identity that characterise Scotland. When employed as a group, the above sources, along with the many other environmentally- and geographically-based historical studies, inform Clearance history and art history by extending our understanding of the role of historical events in the formation of the landscape as well as by expanding the reading of that landscape to include its reflection of the past.

Due to the interdisciplinary and under-researched nature of nineteenth-century paintings of the Highland Clearances, the synthesis of sources from a variety of fields affords the most effective means of thoroughly exploring the relevant paintings and historical events. Readings from history and art history, as well as the areas of landscape studies, environmental history, and geography, strengthen the investigation of the relationship between the Clearances, nineteenth-century painting, and the Highland landscape. Due to the great variety of published materials on the history of the era, the existing literature necessarily embraces the contentious debates regarding the use of sources and the placement of blame and sympathy that enliven the historical writings. On the other hand, direct art historical studies of the subject are so sparse and limited that the realm of relevant sources must therefore be expanded to encompass general surveys on Scottish art history, more focused monographs and exhibition catalogues, and the nineteenth-century magazines, periodicals, and books that illuminate the Victorian art context. Finally, the inclusion of related studies in the environmental and geographical fields serves to extend understanding of the interactions between landscape and historical events and the ways in which artists and observers extract meaning from its appearance. As a group, the assembled sources enhance and fulfil the interdisciplinary needs of this project and inform the investigation of nineteenth-century paintings of the Clearances within art historical, historical, and geographical contexts.

3. The Landscape Perspective

This geographical context highlights the importance of landscape and environment to the course of the Clearances and, as a result, to the investigation of paintings related to the varying effects of the era wrought within the settlement and

land use of the Highlands. It is clear, from the above discussions of both history and historiography, that this aspect of the Clearances has not been fully investigated and offers, particularly in terms of the assembled paintings, a valuable perspective from which to approach the subject. This expansion of the view usually accorded to Clearance history is crucial to transcending the areas of disagreement that colour the existing scholarship on the era and more accurately extends the realm of Clearance history to include not only resettlement, emigration, and the expansion of sheep farming, but also the conceptual shift in the function of land as a setting for both economic gains and for the widening area of dispossession, depopulation, and changing settlement and labour patterns that defined the era. Furthermore, analysis of the role of landscape observation in paintings highlights the ways in which these legacies of the Clearances became manifest in the appearance and use of the northern environment and simultaneously illustrates the prevailing artistic perspectives on the appreciation of landscape throughout the nineteenth century. Accordingly, Alun Howkins observes in his essay on landscape history and painting, as he reconciles the use of paintings as descriptors of landscape history:

> I want to look at them [landscape paintings of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] as a historian but not simply to 'tell the truth' about them as if historical fact were unproblematic; rather I want to talk about the kind of social system that was probably present in those landscapes, to give a sense of the variety and complexity of rural Britain in the nineteenth century. (Howkins 98)

Howkins continues by noting that the land and landscapes depicted in these paintings is shaped by those "who live and work on it and also by those who admire its aspect," allowing the work to reflect both artistic and environmental trends (Howkins 99). His efforts to deploy art historical analysis alongside historical enquiry offer an insightful

route by which to gain access to the environmental perspective reflected in paintings and is especially germane to the closely linked histories of the Highland landscape and the Clearances as figured into nineteenth-century paintings.

Howkins' point is echoed by Sam Smiles in his contribution to the same volume of essays on British landscape painting, as he discusses the role of rural labour in paintings and the consequent ability of the works to illustrate the intricacies of the countryside labour market at the turn of the nineteenth century. While past studies have tended to dwell on the idea that the rural life depicted in paintings is far from the "reality" of life described by the historical record, Smiles recognises that "our task is misconceived if we merely conclude, on the basis of written records or other 'reliable' documentation, either yes, this is an accurate portrayal, or no, this is a nostalgic myth" (Smiles 79-80). He extends this argument to contend that, though such works are not "analogous to agricultural reports" on the subject of rural labour, the paintings nevertheless offer keen insight into the contemporary artistic context that informed its creation and, when "seen from this point of view a picture can be assessed not simply with respect to the 'realities' of labor but also with respect to the choices available to it, such that what it's not doing, the options it's not taking up become as important as the ones it employs" (80). Bermingham extends this point further in her analysis of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century landscape paintings, noting that the assembled work "presents an illusionary account of the real landscape while alluding to the actual conditions existing in it. Hence although it neither reflects nor directly mirrors reality, the rustic landscape does not altogether dispense with it" (3). Smiles' and Bermingham's contentions relate closely to the assembled body of Clearance paintings that reflect, in an underlying way, the rural labour, lifestyle, and landscape that emerged from the Clearance era. While it is evident that

none of the artists discussed in the following chapters chose to paint hard-hitting scenes of Highland evictions or famine, in accordance to the artistic conventions and tastes of their times, their works illustrating emigration and scenes of labour still recognise and convey contemporary happenings that shaped the nineteenth-century Highlands.

As Smiles makes clear, an environmental perspective on paintings does not depend solely on landscape paintings but rather relates to the role of land and landscape in paintings, which, in this case, covers the whole scope of Clearance-induced changes in Highland economics and demographics. For example, in the upcoming chapters dealing with the general themes of emigration and rural labour, the role of the land as a bearer of nostalgic meaning for emigrants and as a canvas for the expression of types of rural labour that signify the underlying influence of Clearance-era land use change is investigated in greater detail. The chapter on landscape paintings likewise offers an examination of the role of the Highlands as both an object of artistic and touristic interest at the same time as widening areas of depopulation allowed for the expanding incidence of sheep and deer within the area. The paintings assembled in the following chapters constitute a largely unexamined area of Scottish art history in their relationship to the Clearances, already a well-researched and much debated aspect of Scotland's past, and also, in their wide-ranging representations of rural life and landscape in nineteenth-century Scotland, recognise the far-reaching economic, demographic, and agricultural changes that swept the Highlands during the Clearance era and make clear the connection between Clearance and landscape.

Chapter III
Landlords and Tenants: Inhabiting the Land

While today the most commonly recognised paintings of the Clearances portray scenes of the tearful departures of emigrants, many other nineteenth-century works possess a less overt but equally meaningful relationship to the events of the Clearances in their depictions of tenant rent collection, the deserted landscape, and the variable Highland economy and its effects on rural labour. As artists like Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841) continued to popularise images of life and scenery in the Scottish Lowlands during the first decades of the nineteenth century, the social, economic, and environmental repercussions of the first phase of Clearance became progressively more apparent within the Highland landscape and subsequently figured into artistic representations of the area. Early works by Wilkie contain the first painted references to the wider rural context of the Clearances and, although these images are not direct representations of the Highland evictions and relocations most frequently associated with the Clearances, they nevertheless portray the economic conditions and social atmosphere that continued to influence the fabric of rural Highland, and indeed British, life during the first decades of the nineteenth century. For example, Wilkie's paintings The Rent Day (1807) and Distraining for Rent (1815) illustrate the social friction and deep emotion inherent in the interactions between landlords and tenants as the monetary and agricultural pressures of the times became increasingly evident in country life. The links between the paintings and the popular culture of engravings and melodrama further enhanced their potency as images of the rural tenantry while also greatly expanding their accessibility to a wide audience of viewers. Wilkie's paintings of the interactions between rural tenants and landlords comprise the earliest representations of the social and economic effects that characterised the Clearance era and contain vivid references to the changing relationship between tenants, their

landlords, and the land that reappears in later nineteenth-century works surrounding the course of the Clearances in the Highlands.

The first of these early paintings, The Rent Day (1807, plate 1), portrays the varied actions, characters, and emotions involved in the collection of rent from a group of tenant farmers, a familiar event in the lives of the agricultural population. The scene takes place inside the ample and well-appointed hall of the landlord, whose steward sternly presides over the accounts at a table in the corner of the room while facing the group of tenants who have yet to contribute their rent payments. Within this group of tenants, Wilkie assembled a diversity of characters to express a wide range of people and emotions, since, as he related to his friend John Burnet during the creation of The Rent Day, "the great thing...is to introduce as much variety of character and expression as possible" (Chiego 132). Consequently, the assembled group includes a very old man at the steward's table and the energetic young man arguing with the unyielding steward; the young widow with her two children, one of which meaningfully toys with the mother's house key; a tenant who is not quite sure of his arithmetic; a pair of men involved in a serious conversation; and two final tenants who stoically await their turn at the steward's desk. In the background, the tenants who have already paid their rent assiduously enjoy their landlord's offer of food and drink and provide occupation for the butler, who is busy opening bottles for the thirsty crowd. The minutely observed details of the scene, such as the architectural elements of the setting and the assortment of household furnishings in the hall, alongside the wide scope of actions depicted within the cluster of tenants, enhance the vitality of the painting and allow Wilkie to express fully the activity of the rent collection day.

This panoramic composition is characteristic of Wilkie's early works, beginning with Pitlessie Fair (1804, plate 2) and The Village Politicians (1806, plate 3), and provides a cross-section of characters, gestures, and expressions as a scrupulously detailed setting for the central actions of the painting.[22] Such an amalgamation of the various people and groups involved in the activities of the rent collection day allowed Wilkie to illustrate the multitude of varying actions and reactions expressed by the assembled crowd, from the pensive countenance of the young widowed mother to the alternately bored and busily indulgent expressions of the tenants in the background, and to portray a full view of the scene. Errington charts this evident physiological observance in Wilkie's early paintings from his interest in the works of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painters like Teniers to his more contemporary involvement with the anatomical studies and artistic teachings of Sir Charles Bell, the skilled surgeon and draughtsman who stressed the importance of motion and muscle action in the painted communication of physical movement and emotion (1985 26-28, 31). Wilkie's perceptive characterisation of individual expression combined with his painstaking accumulation of contextual details in The Rent Day, such as the careful enumeration of household belongings and furnishings along with other sensitive inclusions like the house key in the baby's hand, lend the work a broad range of eloquent visual clues that precisely and fully reveal the personal relationships and responses inherent in the rent day (Errington 1985 39-40). Even the dogs in The Rent Day contribute to the fullness of the scene and the diversity of characters, as one attempts to join the feast by begging from the tenants' table and another expresses contented comfort at the hearth.[23] Assembled together,

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[22] See Chiego, Errington (1975, 1985), and Tromans for wider analyses of Wilkie's art and career.

[23] Throughout his career, Wilkie's "treatment of canine expression...suggests that he regarded dogs as well able to communicate their feelings" and his extension of the action and emotion of the scene to the canine realm further expands his careful observance of human, animal, and material contexts for his

the cross-section of rural residents, animals, and material details affords Wilkie the scope to convey successfully the nuances of the scene and his evident success in the endeavour continued to influence his later works, like Distraining for Rent, which will be discussed below.[24]

Although the range of characters and emotions represented in The Rent Day illustrates Wilkie's well-established skill in the depiction of lively cottage interiors and genre scenes, this painting marks his first foray into the more serious topics of nineteenth-century British country life. The painting emerged as the product of an 1806 commission from Wilkie's friend and benefactor the Earl of Mulgrave, who earnestly admired the artist's earlier works, including The Village Politicians and The Blind Fiddler (1806, plate 4), and who allowed him the freedom to determine the subject of the commissioned work without price constraints (Cunningham I 160-61). In the finished painting, this choice of subject matter not only reflects Wilkie's familiarity with "The Twa Dogs," a Robert Burns poem that comments on the social and economic inequalities between farmer and laird (Cunningham I 161), but also demonstrates his knowledge of the difficult situation facing farm tenants as they coped with the fiscal demands of their landlords and with the changing agricultural conditions of the times. According to Wilkie's biographer Allan Cunningham, these "griping landlords and stern factors" and their tenants, "who are drooping under the double pressure of 'racked rents' and an exacting landlord", allow The Rent Day to come "closer in its subject to our own times and our own experience" than prior works by Wilkie and to portray "well-told story and a life-like representation of a

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paintings (Errington 1985 32). The dog in Letter of Introduction (1813, plate 5) is a prime example of this extension in its active and expressive mediation between the two main figures of the work.

[24] The narrative and contextual conventions employed by Wilkie in The Rent Day, such as the wide cross-section of expressive characters and the use of dogs, also recur in later paintings of emigration by artists like Thomas Faed and John Watson Nicol. These works and their ability to evoke the full sentiment of the parting day through such devices will be discussed in Chapter V.

scene familiar to two-thirds of the nation" (I 160-164). Cunningham plainly links The Rent Day with the Burns poem, stating, "Had Wilkie been totally ignorant of griping landlords and stern factors, he might have learned enough for his picture from the lines of Burns" (I 161). The biographer continues by quoting from "The Twa Dogs", a work that describes the "poinding" of a poor tenant's belongings by a cruel factor. The process of poinding is similar to that of distraining, but remains a more explicitly Scottish reference. Wilkie's finished painting thus grew from a Scottish source of inspiration, but his embedding of the textual source in the painting (and his use of the term "distraining" instead of "poinding" in a later work) affords the work greater applicability to the situations of rural tenants around the country. As a result, Wilkie's careful depiction of the characters and activities involved in the scene allows the work to communicate the goings-on of rent day and, in Cunningham's words, to create a "well-told story." As will be discussed below, this quality enhanced the currency of the scene without commenting harshly on rural issues, a characteristic which enabled the image to garner extensive print sales and which contrasts sharply with Wilkie's later painting, Distraining for Rent. Clearly, Wilkie's choice of subject in The Rent Day and the connection of the scene to occurrences in the lives of contemporary farm tenants and landlords display Wilkie's awareness of rural tenancy issues and the significance of the topic within the social climate of the times.

Additionally, Wilkie's biography and background clearly demonstrate his notable connection to and perspective on the intricacies that characterised rural life in the early years of the 1800s. As the son of the minister of the Manse of Cults in the Kingdom of Fife, the young Wilkie received a substantial education in local schools, as well as later training at the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh, and continued to live at home, painting portraits of his family and the local landowners, until he departed

for London in 1805 (Errington 1985 6). Despite the thrifty lifestyle required by the minister's salary, the Wilkies maintained a privileged but involved position within their parish, allowing young David Wilkie access to the local agricultural community while also providing him a position from which to observe the characters and activities of the village. During his early education, Cunningham describes, the artist

> took little delight in studies in which his pencil or his pen could not bestow form and colour. Indeed, he seems during even his boyish days to have observed every striking sight which such an inland place as Cults presented. He has been heard to describe, with a poet's taste and a painter's eye, the smithy of the district on a night of spring: the swart and sweaty brow of the blacksmith; the tawny faces of the ploughmen who had gathered around with their ploughshares and stocks; and the flashings of the glowing and hissing iron in a welding heat—all were there: no characteristic touch was wanting to give life to the scene. (I 14)

These observations illustrate Wilkie's noted involvement with the rural community surrounding his home and highlight the emerging relationship that provided crucial insight into the village lifestyle and the lives of the local labourers, a point exemplified by the 1804 painting, Pitlessie Fair. The early work provides a panoramic view of the wide variety of characters that compose the village of Pitlessie and includes the Wilkie family in the centre of the painting as members of the community, although their distinct and high-quality style of dress clearly distinguishes them from the local population (Errington 1985 7). This "portrait of a village with its people" (Cunningham I 61) highlights Wilkie's close connection to the lives and activities of the surrounding villagers and labourers and also illustrates his vantage point as an observer of the everyday interactions and activities that shaped their lives, increasing his appreciation of both the joys and struggles of country life.

Wilkie's subsequent foray into painting the realities of tenant life during the Clearance era appeared in Distraining for Rent (1815, plate 6), a work that depicts the forcible seizure of household goods as a security against unpaid rent in a way that, unlike The Rent Day, emphasises the immediacy of the scene. Within the humble cottage interior, the landlord's lawyers, clerks, and bailiffs catalogue and collect the required domestic items, leaving the furnishings in disarray. Despite the seemingly comfortable accoutrements that fill the room, evidence of the inevitability of such a scene is visible in "the idle jack, the burnt-out fire, the empty bee-hive," and other unused items that indicate the farmer's recent struggles (Cunningham I 435).[25] The farmer himself sits slumped at the table while his distraught wife and concerned children and neighbours view the proceedings with varying degrees of sadness, alarm, and contention. As in The Rent Day, even the dog that sits half-hidden under the farmer's chair extends the full range of emotion contained in the scene by conveying the impending desperation and sadness of the event (Errington 1985 25). Cunningham further describes the scene:

> The human heart is prone to compassion; and that of the spectator melts at the sight of the fainting mother and her helpless children, already in want of food, and about to be deprived of bed and bedding. (I 435)

This assembled group of characters, with their carefully observed expressions, is closely linked to the figures in The Rent Day, but the differences in setting and action markedly distinguish Distraining for Rent as a more forceful representation of rural dispossession in spite of the formality of the composition and its chief characters. For

[25] For another example of rental distress, albeit in an urban and more optimistic setting, see Relenting (1855, plate 8) by Thomas Brooks (1818-1891). This later work likewise employs props, like the empty birdcage and sewing paraphernalia, within an enclosed, interior setting to emphasise the poor widow's situation (Wood 1976 226). A similar scene is also described by the *Art-Journal* in its note on Erskine Nicol's 1878 work, Under A Cloud, which apparently portrayed a "crest-fallen and silent" tenant facing the "pompous factor or steward" on rent day (1878 165).

example, the intimacy of the modest cottage interior and the confusion of its contents in Distraining for Rent contrasts sharply with the spacious, well-furnished, and organised hall of the landlord in The Rent Day, emphasising the humble sphere of the tenant farmer and accentuating the sense of dispossession caused by the presence of the distrainers. The action taken by the lawyer, bailiff, and clerks is also visibly in progress in the painting, unlike the more subdued scene depicted in The Rent Day, and serves to underline the potency of the image.

An early pencil and watercolour sketch (plate 8) for the finished painting further stresses Wilkie's conception of the distraining scene as one of immediacy and activity through its dynamic portrayal of the primary figural groups within the work. Although compositionally quite distinct from the completed image, the sketch nevertheless provides insight into Wilkie's initial ideas regarding the characters and actions of the later painting. The boldly composed diagonals of the preliminary drawing encompass and enliven the rapidly sketched figures of the bailiffs as they strain to wrest bedding and other possessions from the struggling tenants who refuse to relinquish their belongings. Such active resistance to the distraining and the expressive manner in which the artist chose to depict the actions of both bailiff and tenant demonstrate Wilkie's original conception of the scene as one rife with emotional exertion. He clearly comprehended the psychological and physical tolls of the rent process and understood the influence of the subject within the realm of contemporary country life, but chose to depict a more static version of the interactions among landlord, tenants, and bailiffs in the completed Distraining for Rent. Perhaps, as David Blayney Brown speculates, this shift is due to Wilkie's propensity for drastically altering his designs throughout the sketch-to-painting process or perhaps it is a result of Wilkie's efforts to tame the scene into a more palatable and saleable

subject (26). Even biographer Allan Cunningham noted these propensities in Wilkie's preparatory efforts by describing the artist's initial inspiration for The Village Politicians of 1806:

> Wilkie saw what he wanted, and instantly made a sketch. This bit of pasteboard, which contains the true first fruit of his genius, is but a rough affair, ill digested and crude, but exhibiting a singular force, and a sort of intrepid wildness of conception and character, much tamed down in the two pictures which originated in this. (I 48)

Whatever the case with the preliminary drawing for Distraining for Rent, it is clear that Wilkie vividly appreciated the emotion and drama inherent in the relations among rural landlords and tenants during the early decades of the nineteenth century.

The immediate quality of the earlier sketch and the distilled but nevertheless potent character of the finished painting alongside the emotional nature of the subject matter, which caused Wilkie some anxiety regarding the saleability of Distraining for Rent, elicited strong critical reactions from some members of its viewing audience and more closely tied it to the contemporary currents of change in land holding and rural lives in both Scotland and England. In his discussion of the painting, Cunningham describes Distraining for Rent as "an original work to all appearance, and one of those which sprang up from the artist's observation, rather than from books" (I 435), a distinction that illuminates Wilkie's intentions for the painting. Due to the painful scene depicted in the work and the striking change it represented in relation to earlier paintings, Wilkie sent the work to the annual exhibition of the British Institution without a fixed price and with some reservations about its ability to sell. Wilkie's friend and engraver Abraham Raimbach reminisced:

> During the uncertainty as to its sale, and when Wilkie expected the picture would remain on his hands, he still expressed satisfaction at

> having made the experiment, and thereby proved that he was not to be estimated merely as a painter of *comic* scenes, a designation under which the public seemed disposed to consider him, but which he felt, with the modest and becoming confidence that was inherent in his nature, was doing him less than justice. (Errington/Chiego 28)

Despite his anxiety, the work was purchased by the Directors of the British Institution for 600 guineas, an action that ultimately secured the fate of the painting (Cunningham I 437-438).[26]

During its exhibition, however, Distraining for Rent provoked many unfavourable responses from the land-owning members of the audience who perceived the work as an affront to their positions and lifestyles. Some critics disliked the wholly serious nature of the scene and expressed a preference for Wilkie's humorous genre scenes (Cunningham I 437), while others viewed the painting as an indictment of landlord behaviour (Errington 1985 5; Payne 25, 89). Benjamin Robert Haydon, a friend of Wilkie and a fellow painter, recalled:

> Beautiful as the picture was acknowledged to be, the aristocracy evidently thought it an attack on their rights. Sir George Beaumont was very sore on the private day, and said Wilkie should have shown why the landlord had distrained; he might be a dissipated tenant. (Errington/Chiego 27)

Raimbach noted that other viewers thought the subject "too sadly real, in one point of consideration, and as being liable to a political interpretation in others. Some persons, it is said, spoke of it as a '*factious* subject'" (Meisel 155). The painting, although

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[26] Interestingly, the motion to purchase Distraining for Rent was seconded by the Marquis of Stafford, one of the most notable art collectors of the age who later became the first Duke of Sutherland (Meisel 155). The Duke was one of the wealthiest landlords in Britain, with a personal fortune of millions and vast estate holdings in the far northern Highlands of Scotland gained through his marriage to the Countess of Sutherland, and is still today one of the most reviled Clearance figures. The Duke and his wife planned and undertook the most rapid, massive, and turbulent clearance scheme of the era (Richards 2000 119-122). The Sutherland Clearances encompassed the years between 1807 and about 1820, contemporary with Wilkie's paintings (see discussion below).

purchased and exhibited by the British Institution, ultimately earned a storage space in the Institution's dark lumber room due to these perceived seditious designs on the role of landlords in the economic and agricultural distresses of the times (Errington 1985 5). Accordingly, artist Charles Robert Leslie observed that "the great excellence of this picture had, at first, induced the Directors of the Institution to buy it...But they were afterwards frightened at what they had done, on it being suggested that the subject was a satire on landlords" (Meisel 155). Furthermore, a reviewer from the *Morning Post* concluded from the painting that

> the disposition of its figures, the nature of their appearance, which comes home to every observer, the varied and perfectly just expression of the countenances, and the general skilfulness displayed by the Artist, almost force us to lose in admiration of his talent the sense of pain excited by so poignant a scene of distress. (Hemingway 114)

These words, though moderated from the angry expressions of the landowners who viewed the work, nevertheless communicate the readily apparent, and often obtrusive, nature of Wilkie's characterisation of the distressing scene and the rural residents involved in the process.

Such discomfort exhibited by the aristocratic and journalistic viewers of Distraining for Rent demonstrates the currency of its observation of landlord and tenant relations during the strained economic conditions of the first decades of the nineteenth century and emphasises its connection to the atmosphere of the era that precipitated the Clearances in the Highlands. Since one might ask how these works, specifically Distraining for Rent and the anglicised nature of its subject, characters, and setting, can offer insight into the wider range and varied nature of rural conditions across the country at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it is important to note

that Wilkie's work drew upon blended visual and textual sources and appeared at a time when the pattern of rural life was undergoing marked change. These economic and technological changes varied from place to place, as will be discussed below, but nevertheless captured the wider atmosphere of shifting labour trends and fluctuating markets. The work, in its depiction of impending tenant dispossession thus communicates the elements of change and distress that characterised rural life in areas throughout Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[27] This transformation, and the current events that formed the background for Wilkie's work on rural tenancy subjects throughout the first two decades of the nineteenth century, encompassed the ongoing rural change that intensified the difficulties of country life in many parts of Britain and that, in the Highlands of Scotland, fed into some of the most infamous and highly publicised Clearances of the era. While the texture and extent of these changes varied across the nation's countryside according to local specifics, the overall rural trend in the nation was one of increasing change in settlement, land usage, and rural production as Eric Richards describes: "The experience of the rural regions in the British Isles was varied—most dramatically different between the south-east of England and central Scotland, and the west of Ireland," but

> images of a peasantry levered out of ancestral homes, of landlords bent on radical change, were neither new nor unique to the Highlands. [Clearance events] were symptoms of the great rural changes sweeping across the face of western Europe. The Highlands, like many other parts of the British Isles, were undergoing a long historical transformation" (2000 32, 34).

[27] Morrison speculates that Wilkie intentionally anglicised the rural rent scene to make the work more accessible to his English audience, an intention that perhaps proved too successful as Wilkie's attempts to portray the issues related to the dislocation and dispossession of the era were highly criticised in Distraining for Rent (Morrison 2003 28).

As Richards notes, the rural conditions of the turn-of-the-century Highlands remained part of the wider trend of rural change that affected the land holding practises and social relations in rural areas across Britain, and even Europe.[28]

Although the expression and effects of this shift varied according to local economies and geographies, the shared experience precipitated fundamental changes in rural life and livelihood, which Wilkie expressed in Distraining for Rent. In the Highlands, the early Clearances of the Sutherland estate in the far north began in 1807 and continued the trend of the removal and resettlement of tenants in favour of more profitable sheep farms that had already occurred in parts of the Highlands since the 1760s.[29] As the "improvement" plans for the Sutherland estate progressed through 1820, the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 dramatically altered the prices and markets that formed the basis of the British economy. For example, the high rents that grew out of the strong wartime economy failed to fall during the downturn, making more difficult the tenantry's efforts to cope with the drop in commodity prices that occurred after the War while the ever-increasing population impelled many bankrupt landlords to undertake schemes of removal, resettlement, and emigration for their distressed and needy tenants (Richards 2000 185-86). Similarly straitened conditions affected the rural labouring population in many parts of England, as high

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[28] The situation of the Highlanders was further complicated by racist attitudes that increased from the end of the eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century. Highlanders, unlike Lowlanders, were frequently described as backward, shiftless, and incapable of diligent work in the racialist writings of the times, an image which unfortunately paralleled the rural distress of the Clearance era (Fenyo 18, 31, 55-56, 61).

[29] The changing economics of agriculture boosted the price of sheep at the same time as persistent population growth in the Highlands limited the ability of the land to support the continuously expanding numbers of people, who were becoming increasingly "redundant" as the positive pressure feeding the expansion of pastoralism meant that far fewer labourers and more valuable arable lands were required (Richards 2000 43). In Sutherland, these forces became manifest in the landlord and – lady's plans for the "improvement" of their vast estate through the sustained removal of the tenantry from the interior glens, which were prime lands for sheep farms, and their resettlement in townships on marginal coastal lands, where they were expected to shift their livelihoods from the agricultural realm to the fisheries (Richards 2000 122, Hunter 2000 63-64, Martins 33). The ensuing Clearances occurred at a remarkably rapid pace and on a massive scale, and, due to frequent eruptions of rancour and resistance as well as the infamously cruel actions of the Sutherland estate manager, Patrick Sellar, received extensive media attention (Richards 2000 138-152, Richards 1999).

wartime prices and poor domestic harvests drove up the price of essential foodstuffs, like bread, a dangerous trend in the shifting rural climate in which workers increasingly depended on cash wages over subsistence agriculture (Newby 30). Following the end of the war in 1815, the rate of unemployment rose alongside worsening economic depression, leading to further protests and food riots against the deteriorating conditions (Mingay xii, 138-139; Newby 30-32; Meisel 156). Even the Lowlands of Scotland, which witnessed a considerably more profitable agricultural climate during the turn of the nineteenth century, remained visibly part of the trend of rural enclosure and the shifting labour and agricultural climates that affected diverse parts of the nation in different ways (Devine 1994 35-57).[30] It is this trend towards modernisation of the rural economy that led to differing responses across the British Isles and that enabled the Sutherland Clearances mentioned above, the food riots in England, as well as the improving production of the Lowlands. These responses constitute the most visible facet of the evolution and enclosure of rural lands throughout Britain and exemplify the ways in which landlords and tenants continued to interact with the determining forces that shaped the nation's agricultural economy during the opening decades of the nineteenth century. Wilkie remains the first artist to translate into paint the economic causes and social effects of this central issue of his times (MacMillan 174). The complaints and defensive comments about the overtly serious tone of Distraining for Rent and the manner in which it portrayed the uneven interactions between tenant and landlord illustrate the closeness of the scene to contemporary trends in the lives of rural tenantry in the British Isles.

This significance of Distraining for Rent becomes increasingly clear when it is compared to a later work, The Penny Wedding (1818, plate 9). This image, although

[30] See Devine 1984 for additional information regarding the comparatively good condition of Lowland agriculture during this period. Devine also offers statistics regarding late-nineteenth-century farm wages in England and Scotland (1984 245-6).

painted three years after Distraining for Rent, was intended by Wilkie to represent a scene fifty years prior to the events of the earlier picture and "was conceived as one of a pair in a sequence representing 'Before and After', or more precisely 'Past and Present'" (MacMillan 172).[31] The Penny Wedding portrays a lively scene of a rural celebration in which the attendees dance, eat, and socialise within a cottage interior. The harmonious golden tones of the work complement the cheerful activity of the dancers and fiddlers while Wilkie's characteristically well-observed portrayal of the range of action and emotion adds to the animation of the scene. Most notably, however, Wilkie's inclusion of the upper class couple in the corner amidst the gathering of peasant farmers indicates the agreeable coexistence of the classes, an element that sharply distinguishes The Penny Wedding from Distraining for Rent, where the classes are strictly delineated by their roles in the seizure of the farmer's goods (MacMillan 173, Payne 8-9). By including such vivid differences within the two paintings, Wilkie sought to compare

> a harmonious society held together by human relationships to one that [was] governed by abstract values of law and profit. The background to the pictures is the whole history of the agricultural revolution, of rural dispossession and enclosure in the name of improvement. (MacMillan 173)

The comparison between the two works clearly distinguishes Distraining for Rent as one of the earliest and most forcefully expressed paintings of the wider social and economic climate surrounding the Clearances.

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[31] MacMillan notes that while Distraining for Rent and The Penny Wedding were "painted quite separately", their relationship to each other as pendants would have been apparent in the engravings of the works (172). Due to the marked unpopularity of the Distraining for Rent engraving, it seems doubtful that this was the case. Regardless of Wilkie's actual intentions for the paintings or their appearance as pendants, however, the two works nevertheless provide an informative contrast in their depictions of the changing social, economic, and agricultural atmosphere of Britain at the turn of the nineteenth century.

This close linkage between Distraining for Rent and the economic, social, and political conditions of the early decades of the nineteenth century and its contrast to The Rent Day were further heightened through the engravings of each piece. Throughout his career, Wilkie possessed an acute awareness of the artistic desires and tastes of his viewing public and consistently strove to widen the scope of this potential audience to include not only the aristocratic and academic members of the art world, but also the burgeoning middle class, members of which were already well familiar with inexpensive prints and broadsides and able to afford such items for their households (Marks/Chiego 73-75). In his *Remarks on Painting* of 1836, reproduced in Cunningham's biography, Wilkie supplied commentary regarding his thoughts on the course of art history and the role of painting as well as his ideas about the relationship between artists and their audience, noting that artists must "obey public feeling as the truest index of the wants of the people" and that knowing "the taste of the public...is to an artist the most valuable of all knowledge, and the most useful to him whose skill and fancy it calls into exercise" (Cunningham III 148). He continues by observing that "to become useful and popular, [art] must not shape her taste to suit a party or a class, but to adapt it to the tastes and capacities of a whole people" (Cunningham III 181). In order to achieve these goals and to appeal effectively to such a widely inclusive audience, Wilkie realised the potential of reproductive prints, which could accomplish widespread and inexpensive dissemination of his images while also augmenting his income as an artist (Marks 73). The combination of his deft choices of subject with the process and economics of engraving enabled Wilkie to "play a crucial role in recognizing, encouraging, and exploiting the rising middle-class art market" (Marks 74) and to succeed in his goal of continually expanding the accessibility and popularity of his works.

According to Wilkie's stated intentions, the engravings of The Rent Day and Distraining for Rent succeeded in amplifying the availability of these paintings to an extensive audience and in increasing viewers' familiarity with the images within the socio-political context of the times. In 1816, Wilkie and his engraver Abraham Raimbach actively marketed the newly printed proofs of The Rent Day throughout Holland and Belgium and the following year met remarkable success with the print in Britain as 450 impressions were sold within the first six days of its publication (Marks 84, 87). Overall, nearly 5,000 copies of the work had been purchased by the time of Wilkie's death in 1841, making the venture a widespread commercial success (Marks 86). The fate of the Distraining for Rent engraving, however, was far less satisfactory. Both Wilkie and the British Institution, owners of the original painting, expressed their unease regarding the potential of the work as a print based on the painting's frosty reception at its 1816 exhibition and consequently refused Raimbach the initial rights to engrave it. Raimbach eventually disregarded Wilkie's warnings of failure and proceeded to purchase the painting from the Institution in 1822 and six years later published prints that, as predicted, were poorly received (Marks 87). As Arthur Marks mentions, the original painting, and its subsequent prints, violated "the painter's own formula for success" by too realistically approaching "the domestic lives of the agricultural middle class, the very sort of people to whom Wilkie had been appealing in the sale of his print" (Marks 87). Clearly, the distressing nature of the subject matter and its continuing currency with the persistent agricultural change sweeping Britain severely limited its appeal to the mass market. The contrast between the success of The Rent Day print and the subsequent failure of the Distraining for Rent engraving further highlights the intensified portrayal of distressed conditions and social commentary in the later work.

As evidence of their continued currency and popularity within academic circles and the mass market, the two paintings served as direct inspiration for a domestic drama theatre production in 1832, en event that underlined Wilkie's strong reliance on theatrical techniques within his paintings and that continued to emphasise the works' relevance to the contemporary socio-economic climate. Throughout his career, Wilkie's paintings, preparatory techniques, and interests maintained visibly strong links to the production and experience of theatre. For example, in 1833, Wilkie prepared a group of sketches and plans directing the actors, sets, and costumes in a series of tableaux-vivants produced by Lady Salisbury as an entertainment to her friends and social circle (Russell 35). The scene sketches, based on the novels of Sir Walter Scott, possess the vibrant spontaneity and meticulous composition that characterise the majority of Wilkie's preparatory works while the actualised scenes, like his finished paintings, demonstrated less of the impulsiveness evinced in the drawings (Russell 37). This direct involvement with theatrical productions and the ease with which Wilkie translated his artistic techniques to the stage vividly illustrate a connection that is further evidenced within many of his completed paintings. Both The Rent Day and Distraining for Rent possess markedly similar spatial arrangements, with the side and back walls of the interiors recreating the constraints of the stage and the high ceilings and relatively diminutive size of the assembled cast of characters additionally emphasising the stage-like space. The linear placement of the people and their arrangement into smaller vignettes recalls theatrical technique while the collected household items that complete the scene function as props for both set decoration and character use.[32] Finally, the location of the viewer as a spectator

[32] Wilkie also occasionally employed miniature clay models of figures and props within a stage-like setting as models for his paintings (Russell 37). See also Payne for a discussion of Wilkie's links to the theatre (6).

outside, but on a level with, the floor plane of the picture reinforces Wilkie's conception and portrayal of the scenes in the visual language of the theatre.

The play based on the strength of these two paintings as evocative images of rural distress, *The Rent Day* by Douglas Jerrold, was first produced at Drury Lane in 1832 and relied upon the currency and accessibility of the paintings within a theatrical framework to appeal to the sensibilities of its audience. Inspired by Wilkie's paintings, though written and produced entirely independently of the artist, the play created a story around his paintings of rural distress and opened with a precise recreation of The Rent Day, much in the manner of Wilkie's later tableaux-vivants. To end the first act, the players on stage arranged themselves into another set piece modelled upon Distraining for Rent, thereby providing spectators with indisputable visual references to both of Wilkie's paintings. The audience certainly would have been familiar with these images through their printed forms and would have been well informed in the dramatic language, actions, and conventions of the domestic drama. As one contemporary admirer observed, Wilkie's paintings were "as familiar to us as household words" due to their popularity as engravings (Swindells 111). Consequently, their prominent reconstruction in the play augmented their already widespread recognition as images of countryside dispossession and more fully accomplished Wilkie's intentions to reach increasingly wider audiences.

Playwright Jerrold shared these democratising beliefs with Wilkie and appreciated that the medium of theatre expanded and made more explicit the tensions expressed in the original paintings. His work gave voice and agency to the characters represented in Wilkie's works, thereby strengthening the ability of each medium to communicate emotions and ideas to the audience. Julia Swindells writes, along with the notable example of Jerrold's *The Rent Day*, "other plays of the period used this

reciprocity of genres, the visual image exploiting painting's capacity to aestheticize the subject, alongside the notion of agency, the actor able to articulate the agrarian cause" (110). Wilkie himself noted the effectiveness of this translation and the interaction between media when he viewed the production on its second night and subsequently composed a letter of praise to scene painter Clarkson Stanfield, writing:

> I went last night to the Theatre, Drury Lane, and cannot express how much I was gratified by the compliment paid to my humble performances in the dramatic representation of the "Rent-Day."[33] Would you, therefore, if occasion offers, give assurance of how much I feel obligated to those who, with yourself, have contributed to render this scenic representation perfect; and particularly to Mr. Jerrold, whose inventive fancy has created out of the dumb shew of a picture, all the living characters and progressive events of real life; and, while paying an unprecedented honour from the dramatic to the painter's art, has, with the help of life, movement, space, and time, shown us in comparison how stationary and how confined is that *one instant*, to which our elaborate art is limited. (Meisel 149-150)

As his words clearly demonstrate, Wilkie fully appreciated the success of Jerrold's efforts in translating his paintings into the language and action of the theatre as well as the ability of the resulting play to communicate effectively the sentiments captured in the original paintings.

As indicated by Wilkie's positive reaction, the play was generally well-received by both critics and audiences, most of whom grasped the social message inherent in the play's depiction of the rural distress that blighted the British countryside. A reviewer from *The Spectator* remarked:

> Wilkie's famous picture of "The Rent Day," has given rise to a drama at Drury Lane, which is likely to vie with it in popularity, and which

[33] It is informative that Wilkie chose the word "performance" to refer to his work as a painter, again reinforcing his technical and ideological connections to the theatre.

> embodies the spirit of that admirable performance in a story of very great interest. Mr. Jerrold, the author, reads 'a great moral lesson' to the absentee landlords, which we wish they could all peruse and profit by. (Meisel 142)

This critic clearly identifies the play with the ongoing social and economic problems that gave rise to scenes of rural dispossession throughout the land.[34] The play, like the paintings on which it was based, emerged at a time of intense rural struggles following the previous few years of poor harvests. Rents remained at a high rate and bankruptcy was common among the smaller tenant farmers, while revolts among labourers and farmers, particularly in the southern counties of England, received press coverage amid growing fears of rural unrest (Meisel 152). The scene was much the same in the Scottish countryside, as populations continued to outstrip the capacity of the land to support such great numbers of inhabitants and as the economics of agriculture persistently created straitened conditions for landlords and tenants. Gradual resettlements continually changed the face of the landscape throughout the Highlands, and especially the Islands, during the 1820s and '30s (Richards 2000 184-189). Through its use of the newly emerging medium of the domestic or village melodrama, of which Jerrold considered himself the originator, the play draws upon these trends of rural trouble and effectively conveys the distress of the tenant family at the imminent loss of their holding. At this time, the domestic drama was most closely tied to the language and actions of rural revolt due to its

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[34] The words of this critic meaningfully presage a later review of Elizabeth Thompson's painting, Evicted, which was included in the 1890 Royal Academy Exhibition (plate 10). This is one of very few paintings to treat explicitly the theme of eviction, albeit in an Irish context, and the reaction expressed by the *Art-Journal* reviewer makes clear the long-lasting links between scenes of rural dispossession and theatre: " 'Evicted'...displays in the foreground of a long, narrow Irish valley a ruined and dismantled cottage, in front of which poses a sturdy peasant-wife, who gazing upwards with a self-consciousness worthy of Drury Lane or the Adelphi, makes—with especial reference to the gallery—a melodramatic appeal to the celestial powers; the evicting party is seen in the distance slowly wending its way down to the valley" (1890 169). A description of Stanhope Forbes' scene of forced auction and bankruptcy, By Order of the Court, follows and offers further testament to the currency of the topic of rural distress throughout the nineteenth century.

development within years of "social and political ferment" and consequently became a "prime vehicle of social feeling" (Meisel 147). The appropriation of Wilkie's paintings into Jerrold's drama underlines their continuing applicability to the long-lasting economic and social change that shaped rural livelihoods as well as their durable ability to convey instructive and affecting commentary regarding the rural distress of the period.

In conclusion, as the appearance and usage of the Highland landscape evolved throughout the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the results of these changes became increasingly apparent in the material and artistic culture of the times. Although many later paintings portray emotional scenes of emigrant departures or changing types of rural labour, which will be discussed below, Sir David Wilkie's paintings of rural social interactions remain the earliest paintings to depict the evolving socio-economic conditions of country life and the concurrent tension that arose between landlords and tenants. Wilkie's early paintings of rent collection and the increasingly uneven interactions between rural residents demonstrate the growing difficulties of land tenure in Britain and forge strong connections to the current economic and agricultural events surrounding their creation. His efforts to portray the social and economic aspects of rural change that swept the countryside of both Scotland and England in the early decades of the nineteenth century gained significant audiences through exhibition, engraving, and theatre. Later artists likewise chose to employ Wilkie's contextual and compositional techniques to convey more fully the emotions and actions involved in the changing rural lifeways that characterised the Highlands of the Clearance era. These effects of the Clearances continued to influence artistic perceptions of Highland labour, emigration, and landscape throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century.

Chapter IV
Rural Labour: Working the Land

While the course of the Clearances progressed through the Highlands and Islands during the late-eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century, the effects on the landscape became increasingly apparent as the Clearances prompted substantial and widespread changes within the system of labour and land use in the area. This aspect of the Clearances, which is frequently overlooked in favour of the more affecting emigration scenes that receive a greater degree of enquiry and description, held far reaching implications for the appearance and use of the Highland landscape and, in the middle of the nineteenth century, coincided with growing artistic interest in the depiction of poverty and labour within both rural and urban contexts. As Victorian artists increasingly turned toward these grittier social realist subjects, the role of the Highlands expanded as a background for changing rural labour and as a scene of all-too-common dispossession and destitution. While these subjects in Scottish paintings reveal the significance of certain types of rural labour in the Highlands as markers of Clearance legacy, their demonstrably apolitical stance contrasts sharply with related social realist images by both English, and more particularly, French artists, who conveyed comparatively more emotive characterisations of work within the countryside. As a group, the Scottish works discussed in this chapter were not painted in recognition of the plight of the Highlanders and, as a result, do not propose political or social action in the context of the Clearances. This absence, however, does not overshadow or undermine the works' importance as implicit portrayals of the types of labour and the Highland landscape that emerged from the context of the Clearances. The intersection between contemporary Victorian artistic trends and the Clearance-era Highlands exposes the ongoing legacy of the economic and demographic shifts of the Clearance era within

the surrounding landscape by illustrating not only the close linkage between Clearance and land use but also the varied rural labour that emerged as a result of the Clearances.

The evolution of ways of rural sustenance and labour constitutes a central theme within the course of the Clearances and, as a prevalent statement of the effects of changing land use and settlement, forms a major topic within the historical literature of the era. For the purposes of this enquiry, the areas of rural labour have been subdivided into seven categories, all of which also apply to the artistic output surrounding rural Highland life of the nineteenth century and which serve to break up the topic into coherent themes.[35] These categories include sheep farming, cattle droving, fishing and kelp harvesting, illicit whisky distillation, and agriculture and represent the most significant avenues through which the legacy of the economic and demographic trends of the Clearance era became manifest in the context of rural ways of life.[36] The appearance and subsequent depiction of Highlanders undertaking these types of occupations during the turn of the nineteenth century and well into the latter decades of that century illustrate the ongoing effects of the Clearances as Highlanders, to varying degrees and in a variety of locations, were induced to pursue alternative courses of employment to supply income within increasingly strained economic conditions. The commencement of fishing activities or kelp harvesting, for example, resulted from the establishment of the crofting system, which was designed to supply an insufficient living to tenants and to require them to undertake other types labour

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[35] I have distinguished these categories as they represent the salient types of both rural labour and painting subjects that prevailed through the Clearance era. Other historians, like Richards, Devine, and Hunter, have also employed similar organisational frameworks for the discussion of changing rural lifeways in the context of Clearance history.

[36] The role of urban work opportunities also represents a major element within the changing labour of the Clearance era, but as it extends beyond the realm of the Highlands and the direct effects of the Clearances, it will be discussed only briefly in relation to many rural Highlanders' searches for additional sources of income. See Devine 1988 (146-150) and Withers 1998.

and employment to provide marginal improvements to income. Consequently, the appearance in paintings of these types of labour encourages enquiry into the role of rural work in both nineteenth-century painting as well as into the social and economic history of the Clearance age, an endeavour that will focus more intensively on the iconography and topography of rural labour in the Highlands than the stylistic or technical aspects of the associated works. The incidence of rural labour within a Highland context served as a significant reminder of the ongoing subsistence difficulties in the Highlands and the painted portrayals of such work likewise commemorate the legacy of the Clearances and the associated agricultural trends that that shaped the use and appearance of the Highland landscape.

1. The Historical Background

As outlined in the historical introduction above, the role of Gaelic poetry in providing scholars with contemporary accounts of the effects of Clearance events on local Highland tenantry is of critical importance and the related poems are often the sole means through which to gain access to insiders' accounts of the happenings.[37] For instance, the poet Allan MacDougall, whose turn-of-the-nineteenth-century work "Song to the Lowland Shepherds" offers an insightful portrayal of the pervasive changes within the appearance of the countryside as the lands surrounding his home were given over to larger-scale sheep farming, recognised the alterations in the labour force and livelihoods of the area as lowland sheep farmers were brought in by the landlords to maintain the expanding herds of sheep.[38] MacDougall also noticed the concomitant contraction in the local cattle stocks, whose presence had previously

[37] The importance of Gaelic poetry as a source on the evolution of landscape and landscape imagery throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries will also be discussed in chapter VI.
[38] See Chapter VI for further discussion of the environmental aspect of MacDougall's verses. See Cheape for a more in-depth treatment of this particular poem and its value as a source of popular reaction against the Clearances.

denoted the multifaceted and successful subsistence efforts of the Highland tenantry. He writes:

> One cannot hear cattle lowing in a fold,
> nobody cares now for white-shouldered cows;...
> since our cattle-tending has declined,
> we have frequently been oppressed by thirst;...
>
> They [the lowland shepherds] rise early on a Sabbath day,
> and they meet with one another;
> when they start to tell a story,
> their conversation consists of talk about grass;
> every one asks of his neighbour,
> 'How, then, did you leave the flock?
> What price did the wedders make?
> Have you sent them off to market?' (Meek 187-188)

Clearly, the poet links the decline of small-scale cattle rearing with the rise of the commercial sheep farmers, a new class of labourer that he vilifies mercilessly over the course of the poem. MacDougall's words and his vivid cognisance of the shifting nature of rural labour illustrate not only the pervasive changes that occasioned such observations but also the centrality of these events to rural life during the decades of Clearance, and after.

The changes wrought by the move towards commercial sheep farming on the physical appearance of the Highland landscape will be discussed in a later chapter, but this shift also held far-reaching implications for patterns of labour in the area, a result that continued to affect the requirements and texture of rural labour practises throughout the nineteenth century. Overall, the transfer of estate lands from the hands of small tenantry to a few larger-scale, consolidated sheep farmers frequently spelled massive upheaval for the established social, economic, and demographic conditions in tenant communities, a subject that has been amply considered by past observers and contemporary historians, as the labour requirements for the newly-established sheep farms were far fewer than those of the erstwhile land holding practises (Richards 2000

43). In contrast to this pre-existing system of land holding, which predated the rise of commercial sheep farming, the creation of wide ranging sheep runs relied upon a largely undifferentiated system of land use as large tracts were put under sheep. In older systems, small communities of tenants frequently held in common enclosed portions of land for intensive small-scale agriculture as well as for livestock winterings. Outlying areas of hill and mountain pastures remained unenclosed and were put into use depending on seasonal needs (Dodgshon 17).[39] As increasingly large swathes of estate lands were devoted to sheep production, these distinctions between the various uses of the land became irrelevant and tenants were often resettled onto smaller slivers of land within crofting communities. The new estate tenants, commercial sheep farmers, were able to maintain and work the land, now the base for a sheep monoculture, with fewer labourers and less intensive labour as one shepherd could look after between 500 and 700 sheep (Orr 107). The introduction of new breeds of sheep from the south, like the Blackface and Cheviot, which produced far more wool and meat per animal than native Highland breeds, exacerbated this trend from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards (Richards 2000 72). Even the casual labour required for sheep farming decreased over the course of the nineteenth century due to the emergence of new techniques like "dipping" that replaced the older trend of "smearing" to protect sheep from parasites and weather. While smearing had been an important source of seasonal employment for some crofters, the rise of inexpensive new dipping techniques meant that even fewer labourers were required in the operation of large-scale sheep farms, particularly by the closing decades of the nineteenth century (Orr 107-108, Hunter 2000 160). The rental income returned to the landlord by large-scale sheep farmers was far greater than that

[39] See also Richards 2000 (32-49) for more discussion of the much-debated character of pre-Clearance life and land use.

of the combined rents of small tenants and also promised a more secure and regular influx of cash.

Alongside the growing presence of sheep within the Highland landscape, the role, upkeep, and visibility of cattle also served as an ongoing symbol of the legacy of the Clearances in a variety of different ways. In pre-Clearance times, and up to about 1780, cattle and beef products were one of the very few Highland exports sent to southern markets, a trend that depended on sustained demand and rising prices, but which was eventually eclipsed by the increasingly profitable market for sheep products during the second half of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth (Richards 2000 34). The course of the cattle industry, and the changes it underwent through the Clearance era, is illustrative of the economic and agricultural pressures exerted on ways of life in the rural Highlands as the area reflected the fluctuating markets for both cattle and sheep (Haldane 187-200). In later years, after the beginning of the nineteenth century, the presence of cattle within rural communities came to signify other concerns, such as the continuing struggle to meet rental payments as well as the changes inflicted upon land holdings as many landlords chose to realign and reorganise their estates to establish a more efficient system. Here, the possession of a few animals by rural crofters represented a significant source of potential income for tenants, since cattle could still be sold for relatively reasonable sums and could, therefore, contribute significantly to rental payments or even, in extreme cases, to the cost of emigration (Hunter 2000 75-76). The shift in meaning and value associated with Highland cattle during the decades of Clearance testifies to the ongoing economic difficulties and changing rural lifeways that characterised the era. The visible, and continually evolving, presence of cattle within rural communities and landscapes is a symbol rich with these associated trends of

fluctuating markets, rural hardship, and Highland land use and the appearance of cattle in the Highland paintings of the period, which will be discussed below, frequently signifies similarly precarious economic conditions.

While some Highlanders maintained a few cattle to augment the marginal income gleaned from the croft, many others were forced to rely on the equally unstable markets for fish and kelp to supplement their meagre earnings. Fishing as well as kelp harvesting and processing constituted two industries that maintained a very close linkage to crofting and Clearance throughout the decades around the turn of the nineteenth century, and later. In many cases of resettlement throughout the Highlands, like at Helmsdale on the Sutherland estate as well as in areas of the northwest coast and islands, landlords and estate managers removed tenants from the interior glens destined for sheep walks and placed them into purpose-built communities along marginally productive coastal lands (Richards 2000 169, Gray 1978 36). Due to the limited subsistence capabilities of these areas, newly arrived tenants were expected to pursue fishing activities to enhance their incomes, often a necessity as rental payments for crofts were frequently unattainable without supplemental employment (Richards 2000 123-127, Gray 1978 81).[40] The difficulties involved in such a dramatic shift in livelihood loomed significantly in the lives of the tenantry, especially during poor fishing seasons, when natural conditions combined with inexperience to create challenging subsistence conditions. As a result, many attempts at establishing fishing industries in the Western Highlands and Islands did

[40] Richards includes a telling excerpt from a letter written by James Loch, the commissioner of the Sutherland estate during the 1810s and author of many schemes of eviction and resettlement. Loch wrote of the displaced tenants: "I am particularly anxious that their lots should be so small as to prevent their massing any considerable part of their rent by selling a beast, their rent must not depend on that. In short I wish them to become fishers only, but if you give them any extent of land or of Commonality they will never embark heartily in that pursuit. To induce them to exertion they must pay more than a nominal rent yet not so much as to oppress them" (2000 155). Here, Loch explicitly detailed the role of cattle and fishing within the changing system of land holding that grew from his attempts at estate reorganisation.

not succeed (Devine 1988 154, Hunter 2000 72). The fishing industry also played a role in the seasonal employment of rural Highlanders, especially those from the west coast, who migrated to the richer fishing grounds and ports of the east coast to participate in the herring and cod fleets in a further effort to supplement crofting incomes (Withers 1998 66, Devine 1988 146-149).

The kelp industry likewise served a specific and crucial purpose in the enhancement of slim rural earnings to feed increasingly bloated tenant rent rates. Although concentrated in west-coast communities, especially the Outer Hebrides, the kelp industry occupied a major economic role in the domestic production of glass during the years before its collapse in the face of foreign competition in the years after 1820 (Richards 2000 228). Kelp, when burnt and processed, produces a component necessary in glass making that fetched high prices during the war years prior to 1815. Consequently, landlords with an eye for increasing profit and industry on their Highland estates encouraged tenants to participate in the harvesting and burning of kelp, a trend that frequently received further impetus from ongoing subdivision of crofts, swelling population numbers, and the tenants' need to seek additional incomes to sustain rental payments (Richards 2000 228, Hunter 2000 72). Unfortunately, such crowded and dependent conditions led to disastrous results upon the collapse of the kelp industry following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, as in the case of the Uists and other Hebridean isles where a vast "surplus" population was left without sufficient employment or sustenance in the face of expanding foreign competition and new industrial processes, circumstances that often led to eviction and emigration schemes on the part of the estate proprietor (Richards 2000 228-230, Hunter 2000 72-77, 92). Overall, the spread of rural involvement in industries like fishing and kelping reflects the changing requirements of the Highland economy during the Clearance era,

as crofters responded to the pressures of rising rents and resettlement and undertook a greater variety of employment to supplement their often insufficient incomes. These two industries are closely tied to the development and spread of crofting districts throughout the north and west and, as such, remain illustrative of the pervasive legacy of the Clearances within the realm of rural labour in the Highlands.

A further effort to augment rural incomes lay in illicit whisky making activities, evidence also of the changing economic and settlement conditions that characterised the Highlands during the Clearance era. Alongside cattle, whisky represented one of the earliest exports from the Highlands, but later came to symbolise the worsening subsistence problems of the area (Richards 2000 34). The conversion of grain into whisky on a small, local scale signified attempts by the tenantry to process available resources into more readily saleable products and, from there, into cash to supplement incomes and contribute to rent payments (Dodgshon 112). The production and availability of illicit whisky, while certainly attesting to increasingly distressed rural conditions, also became symbolic of the perceived sloth and degradation of poor Highlanders, who frequently suffered from outsiders' misapprehensions of their living conditions and general character (Devine 1994 119).[41] Like other markets for Highland produce, such as kelp and cattle, the demand for illicit whisky slowed during the 1840s and '50s as the number and production of legal distilleries in the area rose and effectively curbed local distillation efforts (Richards 2000 244, Hunter 2000 91). The role of whisky making nevertheless serves as an additional reminder of the effect of the economic conditions, including the transition to a rent-based land holding system and the increasingly difficult attainment of income from marginally productive crofts on reorganised estates, that pervaded the

[41] For a greater discussion of these nineteenth-century stereotypes, see Fenyo.

Highlands throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as an outgrowth of the Clearances.

Finally, the texture of agriculture evolved throughout the decades of Clearance and, because many rural communities experienced the concurrent trends of population expansion and resettlement onto ever more subdivided and concentrated plots, the use and function of arable lands likewise reflected the legacy of the Clearances. This trend became particularly apparent in the Western Isles and other coastal areas in the west, where newly resettled tenants were often forced to rely upon insufficient ground on marginally productive coastal land for cultivation. Where once arable lands had been divided among the inhabitants of a rural community to allow for sufficient subsistence support, the agricultural portions of many newly created crofting settlements consisted merely of poor plots of ground for each household, many of which were simultaneously faced with the conflicting demands of expanding numbers and the necessary, but impracticable, option of subdividing existing plots among family members (Richards 2000 48). The increasing dependence on potatoes and lack of other viable sustenance options exacerbated the already distressed condition of the region and made more damaging the effects of the potato blight and other crop failures through the 1840s (Richards 2000 199, Devine 1988). These physical changes within the system of agriculture, and the visibility of the inappropriate management course represented by rural subdivision and crop over-dependence, illustrate clearly the shifting trends in rural labour occasioned by the redirection of land use within the context of the Clearances.

The brief historical discussions provided above illustrate the evolution of rural labour systems that occurred throughout the Clearance era, often the result of shifting economies, settlement patterns, and ways of rural livelihood, and that directly affected

the appearance and experience of the Highland landscape for both local populations and travellers. Many types of rural labour, such as sheep farming, cattle droving, fishing, kelp harvesting, illicit whisky making, and other agricultural activities, reflected the enduring legacy of the Clearances from the decades prior to the turn of the nineteenth century until well into the later years of the 1800s and visibly expressed the shifting course of Highland land use. This close linkage between the development of Highland labour and the emerging look of the landscape informed the impressions of tourists and visiting artists to the Highlands during the Victorian era and coincided with the growing artistic interest in the social realist themes of rural labour and the rural poor that surfaced over the course of the nineteenth century in both British art and the larger context of European painting.

2. The Paintings

Throughout its 1866 critique of the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy, the *Art-Journal* noted the increasing popularity of the rural and urban poor as subjects of genre scenes. In a description of one of Scottish genre painter Erskine Nicol's contributions to the exhibition, the *Journal* wrote:

> He manages to bring more dirt and rags into the Academy than any one else. It is to the glory of his heroes that they are unwashed....They probably, however, will long remain of more value to the pictorial world, and for the sake for Mr. Nicol, we can only hope that their condition in life will never be materially ameliorated. (1866 167)

These comments relate to the burgeoning mid-century trend of depicting scenes of poverty and labour, a theme that had stemmed from works of the previous decades and that continued to expand and develop throughout the 1870s and '80s, as artists working with subjects of urban and rural dispossession and distress proceeded to

pursue increasingly realistic depictions of social problems. At the time of the *Journal*'s comments, however, such social realist subjects as depicted in the works of painters like Erskine Nicol and Thomas Faed, among others, were witnessing a shift from the pathetic set pieces of the 1840s and '50s to the grittier depictions of social ills of both the urban and rural scene that appeared with greater frequency through the 1870s and '80s (Treuherz 1987 134). While this shift revealed growing interest in the links between artistic representation and social problems, the overall quantity of social realist subjects constituted only a small portion of the more common types of paintings, such as history paintings, landscapes, and genre scenes, represented within the Academy exhibitions. The works that did appear which dealt with the coarser aspects of city life and rural labour almost uniformly enhanced the sentimental aspects of the scene through the softening of images of poverty and work to elicit emotional responses from the viewing audience, a trait that, while limiting the ability of the works to serve as objects of social commentary and calls to reform (often not the artists' intention in the first place), nevertheless served to boost the popularity of the images and, therefore, to assist in drawing gentle attention to the distressed circumstances central to the works (Treuherz 1987 13).

In terms of the Clearances, depictions of rural labour in the Highlands emerged alongside this undercurrent of expanding interest in social realist subjects and also corresponded to the ongoing expression of the legacy of the Clearances in the livelihood and landscape of the Highlands. The assembled works, which range from the early nineteenth-century Highland paintings of Sir Edwin Landseer to later works by John MacWhirter and others, reflect the wider artistic context that favoured gentle evocations of rural labour and distressed living conditions in the countryside and fit neatly within this realm in their varied depictions of cattle droving, fishing, kelp

harvesting, and whisky distillation, among other types of rural activities. This group of images, however, has heretofore garnered little scholarship regarding the relationship between their painted depictions of rural labour and the physical changes wrought in the Highlands during the Clearance era, a legacy that exerted a formative impact on the development of different types of employment during the nineteenth century. These jobs, such as the kelp harvesting efforts discussed above, are highly symbolic of the after-effects of Clearance-era resettlement efforts as well as of the fluctuating economies that typified the times and the depiction on canvas of such activities remains an expression, whether conscious or unconscious on the part of the artist, of these events and conditions. The resulting images offer observant descriptions of rural labour and labourers in the Highlands that, while neither citing the Clearances directly nor even suggesting a moral or political opinion regarding the plight of the Highland poor, nevertheless capture the pervasive legacy of the Clearances upon Highland lifestyle and enhance the linkage between landscape and Clearance.

Within the larger context of Victorian art, these paintings of rural labour and the rural poor of the Highlands comprise a smaller subset of works that extend the trends already established by nineteenth-century British artists who chose to work on subjects approaching social realism. Due to the relative scarcity of such subjects and the paintings' connections to potentially political and contentious social topics, the relevant works have not received considerable coverage within current art historical studies. While the political and social content embedded within the works of artists like Gustave Courbet have been heavily analysed in recent years, the contributions of British artists have elicited surprisingly few serious academic studies, perhaps a product of the perceived inability of works by artists like Richard Redgrave and

Thomas Faed, for example, to draw as fully upon the political power of emotive social realist subjects as the work of the aforementioned French artist. Still, nineteenth-century British social realist subjects, which include the works of Scottish artists and other painters working on Highland topics, have recently inspired selected studies and exhibitions that confirm the contemporary role occupied by these works in expressing and depicting the plight of the urban and rural poor within the larger contexts of Royal Academy exhibitions, Victorian press, and the emerging interest in social realism. These studies, and the painted works upon which the authors' arguments rest, facilitate entry into the background that underlies the appearance of paintings of labourers, urban and rural poor, and other seemingly distressful subjects and shed light on the emergence of similar subjects depicted within Highland surroundings.

In his study and catalogue accompanying the landmark 1987 exhibition of British social realist subjects, Julian Treuherz provides one of the very few overviews of social realism in Victorian art.[42] The exhibition catalogue and accompanying essays in *Hard Times: Social Realism in Victorian Art* offer readers a concise and insightful analysis of the development of social realism and convey a nuanced investigation into the evolution of these subjects and the paintings' roles as objects of social commentary (or lack thereof) throughout the nineteenth century. From the outset, Treuherz is quick to point out that social realist paintings, or, those works that depict poverty and other concerns of increasing industrialisation within both the rural and urban realms, represent the minority in comparison to other, more palatable Victorian subjects and, despite the superficial difference inherent in the artists'

[42] Other general surveys on Victorian art tend to touch very briefly on the theme of social realism and often focus solely on the late-nineteenth-century works of Holl, Fildes, and Herkomer. For example, Wood (1976) offers cursory chapters on specific themes, like "Work" and "Hard Times," while Reynolds and Lambourne swiftly cover the major points of social realism within the larger context of Victorian painting (Reynolds 179, Lambourne 326-336, and Maas 237-239). See also Sheila Smith's essay in Nadel/Schwarzbach (14-29).

choices of subject, almost uniformly depict the distressing circumstances of the poor with a close attention to the ability of the subject to evoke pathos and sentiment in viewers (9-10). He continues by arguing that, far from representing a weakness of subject or intention, many of the works discussed received critical acclaim for this emotional content and the artists were highly praised and valued for their skill in the elision of deliberate harshness in favour of more delicate emotion (10). In attempting to reconcile modern viewers with this pathetic tendency, Treuherz furthermore points out:

> Some modern writers complain that social realist pictures did not promote social reform. They merely aroused sympathy or pity for social problems...But how a work of art can specifically promote wholesale social reform is nowhere stated. These pictures were not intended to be acts of reform; they operated most effectively on the level of increasing public awareness of problems which had been hidden far too long. (1987 13)

With this view clearly stated, Treuherz embarks upon a chronological discussion of the course of social realism in Victorian art, beginning with the 1840s works of Richard Redgrave and G.F. Watts, continuing through the mid-century rural subjects of Thomas Faed and others, and culminating in the later, and considerably grittier, 1870s and '80s paintings by artists Frank Holl, Luke Fildes, and Hubert von Herkomer. He also assesses the relative influences of European artists Gustave Doré and Alphonse Legros and considers the impact exerted by the engravings published in illustrated news sources like *The Graphic* and *The Illustrated London News*, among others, that included representations of contemporary subjects alongside reportage. Throughout the course of the catalogue, Treuherz underscores the importance of examining social realist works in a continuum that clearly illustrates the evolution of

Victorian artists' treatment of poverty and the labouring poor, as subjects progressed from the sentimental, sanitised poverty of mid-century to the greater realism and stark conditions portrayed in latter decades. The artists' continual reliance on the pity and sympathy of their audience, however, remained a constant theme, though with simultaneously evolving prompts within the paintings. The resulting study of social realist subjects offers crucial insight into the development of this strand of Victorian painting and illuminates more fully the emotional import and social awareness embedded within the relevant works.

While Treuherz's work remains the primary source dealing with the larger themes and painters of social realism, his point is echoed by other sources, including wide-ranging general studies by Scottish art historians Duncan MacMillan, William Hardie, and John Morrison as well as other, more focused analyses by Lindsay Errington and Donald Rodee. MacMillan deals briefly with depictions of rural labour in Scotland, pointing out, like Treuherz, that the majority of large scale rural subjects appeared in the later decades of the nineteenth century, particularly the 1870s, as artists like Hugh Cameron, David Murray, and Robert McGregor turned toward the depiction of labour in East Lothian agricultural communities in the manner pioneered by Courbet, Millet, and Israels in earlier decades (244, 254-255).[43] Likewise, William Hardie brings up the works of Colin Hunter and Hamilton Macallum, among others, who worked in a west coast and Highland context and whose works served as a "type

[43] The later paintings by these artists and others like William Darling McKay and James Guthrie, which focused on the changing labour practises in the Lowlands, demonstrate the painters' reaction against the well-established romantic imagery of the Highlands and Islands that had remained popular throughout the course of the nineteenth century (Morrison 2003 170-174, Billcliffe 27-29). Their works from the 1880s reflect a highly specific observation of local rural labour in southeastern Scotland and, according to Morrison, are often superficially designated as depictions of the plight of the rural poor (2003 177). Morrison asserts, however, that the agricultural downturn of the last quarter of the 1800s had "very little impact on Scottish farm labourers, particularly those in the southeast" and the works consequently are pointed depictions of changing localised labour rather than commentary on rural life (2003 177-180). He goes on to aver that the works of the Glasgow School and the theme of rural labour in the Lowlands "did not displace the romanticised image of the country" as portrayed through the well-established imagery of the Highlands (2003 184).

of documentary transcript of life in the remoter parts of Scotland [that] was appreciated more as social history than as art" (73). In this respect, Hardie again agrees with the contentions espoused by Treuherz regarding the general function of social realist paintings as more descriptive than instructive, though Hardie accords a difference to works depicting the Scottish Highlands in their distinguishing of the more remote and distinct ways of life and labour that remained dissimilar from rural life in other parts of the country or in cities. Finally, John Morrison takes this perspective slightly further in recognising that the "documentary" paintings of peat gathering and harvesting by George Reid and G.P. Chalmers may "reflect changing practices in rural labour" (2003 163-164) in non-Highland areas. Despite these fleeting references, however, none of the art historians mentioned above consider paintings of changing Highland labour and land use within the context of the Clearances, an omission that underlines the infrequently considered linkage between the Highland environment, both painted and experienced, and the effects of the Clearances.

Two final studies by Howard Rodee and Lindsay Errington serve to illustrate the slightly wider range of sources dealing with the role of social realism within British art. Both authors' doctoral theses offer invaluable insight into the topic, though in vastly different manners. Rodee's work provides an exhaustive compilation of Victorian paintings dealing with rural and urban scenes of poverty, as expressed by labour, circumstances, and setting, from 1850 until 1890. His extensive use of primary source materials, from exhibition listings to critical reviews published in nineteenth-century newspapers and magazines, provides insightful access to Victorian perspectives on the depiction of poverty within art and allows Rodee to argue, much like Treuherz, that most mid-century paintings of the rural poor within this period

"emphasized pathos but lacked messages that could be called explicitly and clearly social" (32). He restates this view later, noting that such scenes of the rural poor are more effective at "expressing poverty instead of describing it" (47). Errington's thesis, again presaging portions of Treuherz's later arguments, employs literature and printed media in its examination of social themes, particularly those appearing in the works of the Pre-Raphaelites (Errington 1984).[44] She also deals with subjects of rural poverty, famine, and emigration, though with an increasingly concentrated emphasis on specific strands that informed social realist painting around the middle of the nineteenth century. Due to the limited body of work treating these themes within British art, the writings of both authors present invaluable details about paintings and artists as well as the literary and critical contexts that informed the creation and reception of social realist works in the Victorian art world.

The background provided by the above sources serves to illuminate the general art historical context against which paintings of Highland labour and livelihood emerged throughout the nineteenth century, but fails to offer insight into the close linkage these works display to the concurrent formation of the Highland landscape alongside the agricultural and economic changes wrought by the events of the Clearance era. With this dearth of interpretation and analysis in view, the following collection of works depicting the various types of rural labour in the Highlands supplies further investigation into the role of such paintings as descriptors of rural poverty within the Victorian art world as well as into the ability of the works to depict the ongoing legacy of Clearance-era economic and agricultural adjustments within the northern landscape. As in the brief historical outline above, the works will be discussed according to the differing areas of rural labour that characterised life in

[44] See also Murdoch for an investigation of realism and the Pre-Raphaelites.

the Highlands during and after the Clearances: sheep farming, cattle droving, fishing and kelp harvesting, illicit whisky distillation, agriculture and other rural labour, and the day to day existence of the poor in the Highlands.

a. Sheep Farming

As the influence of sheep farming upon the formation of the Highland landscape will be discussed in Chapter VI, its role in the rural labour of the Clearance era will be investigated only briefly here in the paintings of Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), David Farquharson (1839-1907), and Richard Ansdell (1815-1885). Sheep farming occupies a dual role within both Clearance history and the paintings of the period since the development of the market for sheep represented a widening economic opportunity for Highland landlords and, as a result, actively affected the trends in rural labour of the area during the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The newly populous herds of sheep that consequently began appearing in the Highland landscape during this time, and the movement of human inhabitants that often accompanied this expansion, necessarily altered the look of the landscape for both Highlanders and outside tourists and artists who arrived in the north, armed with guidebooks and literary publications by authors like Sir Walter Scott and already primed to appreciate the uninhabited and wild aspects of Scottish scenery. These landscape-wide implications of sheep farming will be reserved for Chapter VI, when the works of well known landscapists and sheep painters like Joseph Farquharson will be presented within a discussion of landscape paintings and the Victorians' growing interest in Highland scenery. For now, the labour aspect of sheep farming and the techniques involved in its development in the Clearance-era Highlands will form the basis for this section.

Perhaps one of the best-known images of sheep herding by a Scottish artist is

Sir David Wilkie's Sheepwashing of 1817 (plate 11), a work that has seemingly caused some confusion among historians and art historians about its location. The painting depicts a rural farming landscape in which a herd of sheep is undergoing a dipping process to protect them from pests. Some art historians and other sources, including the Scottish primary source database, SCRAN, have determined that the scene must be set within the Highlands due to Wilkie's interest and travels in the area. The SCRAN caption for the work consequently conveys a very simplistic idea of the Clearances and the painting's apparent connection to pastoral changes in the Highlands regarding its portrayal of sheep:

> In the mid-eighteenth century, whole communities were leaving the Highlands as landowners could make more money by keeping sheep on their land rather than renting it out to people. The Blackface and Cheviot sheep were introduced into the Scottish Highlands in the first main period of Clearances from 1785 to 1820.
> (http://www.scran.ac.uk)

Although the SCRAN caption explicitly links Sheepwashing to the experience of pastoral communities in the Highlands during the Clearances, the work has elicited very different reactions from academics and art historians. In his discussion of a smaller version of the large painting, which now belongs to the National Gallery of Scotland, Hamish Miles cites the location of the scene as Fisherton Delamere on the River Wiley in Wiltshire and Morrison agrees (Miles fig. 8, Morrison 2003 28). This seems a likely assumption, given the lightly forested and generally flat agricultural landscape that forms the backdrop for the sheepwashing activities, which remain well integrated into the surrounding fields. Even with these locational disagreements, the work nevertheless depicts the labour conditions and activities of the sheep industry as it evolved in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Although the effects of

changing pastoral practises varied throughout the country and Wilkie's scene likely portrays an English context, his work reflects the changing technologies and sheep breeds that effected fundamental changes in the sheep industry in areas across Britain. In the Highlands, these changes, including the transition from smearing to dipping and the introduction of southern breeds of sheep like the Cheviot and Blackface, led to the rapid expansion of sheep farming throughout the Clearance era (Hunter 2000 160, Richards 2000 72).

The subject of sheep farming likewise spread into paintings of the Highlands and appeared in numerous works included in the Royal Academy exhibitions. Examples like Richard Ansdell's 1859 work Sheepwashing in Glen-Lyon as well as the 1880 painting Sheep-plunging by David Farquharson illustrate the currency of the subject as well as the artistic attention given to the technological innovations that had fundamentally altered the practise of sheep rearing across the country, and particularly in the Highlands. The current location of these works is, unfortunately, unknown, preventing a detailed visual analysis of the specifics of sheep herding, but their titles attest to the availability of such imagery in the Highland paintings of the Victorian era. The role of sheep in the Highland environment, a subject that formed the basis for many more sheep paintings of the era, will be discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

b. Cattle Droving

As discussed above, the practise of cattle rearing and droving to southern markets occupied a central place in the development of Highland land use and labour from the sixteenth century onwards, though witnessing a decline by the early decades of the nineteenth century. Cattle represented an integral part of the development of the economic activities of the area, as the beasts were often employed as rental

payments or otherwise used to augment the meagre incomes of tenants and crofters throughout the Clearance era, thereby symbolising the ongoing struggles of poor tenants to wrest a living from the land. The incidence of droving activities, and particularly the deterioration of this sector of employment in the face of increasing positive pressure on the sheep trade, which, in combination with other factors including improved transportation, contributed to the demise of cattle droving, mimics the shifting fortunes of the Highland economy and illuminates the changing ways of life that slowly swept the area through the middle decades of the nineteenth century (A. Haldane 187-200). The artistic depiction of these droving activities in paint dates from the work A Scene in the Grampians—The Drovers' Departure[45] (1835, plate 12) by Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), the earliest and best known painting illustrating the activities and characters involved in the great cattle drives that shifted herds from northern areas to southern markets, and closes for the purposes of this chapter with A Highland Parting (1885) by Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), a work that portrays a highly nostalgic backwards glance to the droving past of the Highlands.[46] The comparison of the two works offers a vivid glimpse into the treatment of droving as a subject of rural

[45] While the title seems to locate the picture within the Grampian Mountains, the actual location of the work is debatable. Ormond maintains that the mountains depicted in the work "do not look very much like the gently rounded Ochil Hills," the Perthshire range mentioned in a pamphlet on droving that was published around 1841 to accompany the print of the work (85). He continues by noting that "neither the lake or firth on the right nor the romantic-looking castle has yet been identified" (85). Due to these uncertainties and the clear visual sympathy of the work to Landseer's earlier paintings of Highland life and scenery, I have taken the work to represent a generic scene of a highland locale. The precise geographical location of the painting is of lesser importance than its depiction of a type of labour that fulfilled a crucial role in the course of northern labour and economy. In this, Landseer's painting provides a valuable glimpse into the role and depiction of droving as it interacted with the shifting economic necessities that emerged from the Clearance era and became inculcated into the visual culture of the times.

[46] According to Errington, the image of the drover as a Highland character could also be traced to some of the figures in Wilkie's The Village Politicians (1806), though Landseer's painting provides a livelier picture of droving activities and labour (1985 29). See also The Drover's Halt, Isle of Mull in the Distance (1845) by Richard Ansdell (1815-1886) and Sheep Gathering in Glen Sliaghan, Isle of Skye (c. 1854, plate 13) by Ansdell and William Powell Frith (1819-1909) for other examples of the droving scene that extend Landseer's imagery and that illustrate the increasing popularity of distant locales in the Highland and Islands for artists (Halliwell 8-9). Other droving subjects that appeared in the Royal Academy exhibitions include two works by Peter Graham, A Glint of Sunshine (1877) and A Highland Drove (1880), as well as A Highland Drove (1877) by Henry Garland (1834-1913).

labour and introduces Landseer's role in this area of Highland painting as one of unusual interest as his works provide a nostalgic yet sensitive, though not political, depiction of the changing ways of life and labour in the Highlands of the early nineteenth century. Landseer's work in The Drovers' Departure, which celebrates the nostalgia of the droving life upon the instance of its final decline, reflects the changing economies and livelihoods that suffused the Highlands during the Clearances and that continued to inform paintings of the area throughout the nineteenth century.

Landseer's painting evokes the varied activities and picturesque scenery that characterised the droving scene in the Highlands in its depiction of a rural family that has assembled to say goodbye to its patriarch, who is prepared to lead the collected herd of cattle, visible in the distant plain of the glen, to the southern markets.[47] The central male figure will serve as the "topsman" for the drove and, in this capacity, will provide leadership to the other drovers, who generally looked after about 50 or 60 cattle each, by planning routes and arranging night grazings and resting places for both cattle and drovers (A. Haldane 27-30). The family and the surrounding animals, from the hunched old man and aged Highland pony to the young couple, soon to be parted, and the playful puppy in the foreground, encompass a wide scope of ages and accentuate the bustle of the departure scene in the same way that the cross-section of characters and variety of contextual cues enhanced Wilkie's scenes of rural rent collection.[48] In addition to this varied assemblage of people and livestock, the

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[47] The presence of the sheep in the foreground of the painting create an interesting wrinkle in the work, as sheep were generally believed to be unable to withstand the long treks required in droving. During the nineteenth century, however, greater numbers of sheep passed over the drove roads, which had traditionally existed as routes over which to shift cattle (A. Haldane 200-201)

[48] Interestingly, this work foreshadows many later Clearance images of emigration, including The Hope Beyond (1853) by Jacob Thompson and The Last of the Clan (1865) by Thomas Faed, that similarly depict the departure of family groups, albeit under different circumstances, alongside their household possessions and animals.

collected domestic items, such as the rough hewn stool in the foreground and the sagging, sod-roofed dwelling with its rain collection bucket, allude to the material poverty of the family and the inherent hardships of the drovers' everyday existence within the rural landscape. However, since these hints of adversity remain disguised amidst the fanciful costumes and the activity of the departure, the painting provides a picturesque depiction of the drovers' close-knit family in an expansive Highland landscape, complete with mountains, loch, and castle (Ormond 1981 85). In his depiction of the grand scenery and rural, but sufficient, nature of the family's habitation, Landseer conveys a visual appreciation for the bustling details and characters of the droving trade in the Highlands.

These picturesque qualities underline the nostalgic, and almost fantastical, intentions of the painting, which illuminates the changing livelihoods of Highlanders during and after the Clearance era by celebrating ways of life that were certainly disappearing at the time of Landseer's painting. When this work was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1835, the droving lifestyle celebrated by Landseer was suffering a marked decline in the Highlands as landowners turned toward less labour-intensive uses of the land, including the creation of deer parks and the herding of sheep without the support of the large groups of tenant labourers that were required for droving (Ormond 1981 84). The influence of improved road systems and the development of railroads in the Highlands also contributed to the decline of droving (A. Haldane 208). Instead of depicting the increasingly deserted Highland landscape that resulted from the resettlement of tenants, Landseer's painting nostalgically celebrates the close involvement of people with pastoral labour as well as their peaceful integration into the natural environment. This picturesque glance into the past sheds light on the changes effected by the progress of the Clearances and its lasting economic and

agricultural legacy by providing a glimpse into disappearing rural lifestyles. In this way, Landseer's image captures, however unconsciously, a central moment in the development of the Highland economy during the early decades of the nineteenth century, as the legacy of the previous decades of reorganisation and adjustment to new economic and social conditions shaped the use and settlement of the Highland landscape. His work, due to its picturesque and nostalgic depiction of the droving lifestyle, captures this aspect of Highland livelihood just prior to its complete demise in the following years, lending the work particular resonance as an image that incorporates the impending legacy of the Clearance-era economic change upon the livelihood of rural Scotland.

Ormond likewise recognises this quality in many of Landseer's paintings of the Highlands, a group of work that includes The Drovers' Departure, and, while he conveys a simplistic interpretation of the Clearances and the economic conditions that informed and emerged from the events of the era, nevertheless views the collected works as evidence of Landseer's continuing interest in depicting the changing lifestyles of Highlanders as they reacted to the ongoing effects of Clearance-era resettlements and readjustments to changing markets. In discussing the influence of both Sir Walter Scott and Landseer on the creation of popular Highland landscape conventions in the first half of the nineteenth century, Ormond notes the ongoing disconnection between these images and the realities of rural life at the time, and describes the changing economies and estate policies that often led to tenant resettlement, eviction, and emigration as well as the changing use of the land as it passed into sheep walks and sport parks (1981 60). Despite his rather homogenised and unicausal description of the Clearances, Ormond does pause to remark that the Clearances "did not happen all at once and effects varied greatly from region to

region, but the clearances left an indelible psychological scar" (1981 60). As he applies these contextual events to the works of Landseer, Ormond makes a valuable observation, worth quoting at length, writing:

> Certainly in the 1820s it was not impossible to overlook what was happening, and there is little hint of economic or political comment in Landseer's pictures. On the other hand, Landseer was keenly perceptive of the poverty and hardship suffered by many of the resilient characters he admired so much. His interiors paint a stark picture of living conditions in the crofts, or tenant farms, and the acuteness of his observation endows the simplest accessories with a telling sympathy. Long before the great realist painters like Courbet, Landseer used the grueling activity of stone breaking as a symbol of the soul-destroying effects of manual labor. No less powerful are his pictures of whisky distilling and poaching, illegal activities that flourished in such a deprived society[49]...In many ways Landseer was breaking new ground and making, rather than following, a movement...Scotland aroused Landseer's imagination and his feelings, but whatever his sympathies toward the plight of the Highlanders he did not seek to change it. (Ormond 1981 60-61).

With these thoughts, Ormond briefly touches upon Landseer's place within the established imagery of the Highlands as well as his relationship to the emerging Victorian interest in paintings of social realist subjects, in both rural and urban contexts. As a result, Ormond is one of few art historians to link Landseer's paintings of rural labour within the Highlands to the prevailing economic and social history that informed their creation. Indeed, as is evidenced by the work's details, such as the collected household paraphernalia and the delineation of the droving hierarchy, and its overall depiction of labour within the Highlands, Landseer occupied a vital role in the conveyance of Highland imagery. The inclusion of elements of picturesque poverty

[49] I will return to these subjects and their place in Clearance imagery later in the chapter.

and fantasy, like the incongruous tree-trunk doorposts, further highlights the nostalgic elements of the work and emphasise its celebration of the droving lifestyle as changing ways of rural labour swept the Highlands during the Clearance era.

A final comparison with Gourlay Steell's late-century painting, A Highland Parting (1885, plate 14), will serve to highlight the place of droving within Highland imagery that spans the Victorian era. Like Landseer's earlier painting, Steell's work again portrays drovers at work, herding both cattle and sheep on their way to southern markets and, while his depiction of typical Highland visual conventions, such as the kilts, cattle, and mountains, is rather distracting, his use of droving as a picturesque element of the Highland past serves to underline more completely the connection between landscape imagery and rural labour.[50] The role of droving as a clearly nostalgic and past element of northern life commemorates, however consciously, the decline of this type of employment in the Highlands as a result of changing uses of the land during and after the Clearance era and places it definitively within the past.[51] Steell's pastiche of Highland symbols and the clichés it presents extend the gently romantic images of Landseer and locates the subject more firmly within the realms of picturesque nostalgia. In their depiction of the droving lifestyle and its place in the Highland environment, the works nevertheless offer perspective on the changing ways of rural life in the Highlands, as seen through the droving trade, and serve to foreshadow the other images of rural labour that will be discussed below.

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[50] Morrison writes of the work: "...Gourlay Steell's A Highland Parting shoehorned into one composition drove roads, Highland cows, kilts, heather, mountains, in short as many clichés about Scots and Highland culture as he could unearth" (219).

[51] Another late-century droving image that serves much the same purpose is The Drover's Road (1893, plate 15) by Edward Hargitt (1835-1895), which portrays a herd of cattle and their bekilted drovers within an expansive and deserted landscape. Like Steell's image, Hargitt's work takes a nostalgic view of droving and relies upon established conventions of the uninhabited and stormy Highland landscape to convey this view of past ways of rural labour.

c. Fishing and Kelp Harvesting

The development and attempted expansion of the fishing industries in the Highlands represented another assay on the part of both landlords and tenants to cope with the constant subsistence pressures and economic hardship that characterised rural life throughout the Clearance era. As outlined in the introduction above, some landlords, such as the owners of the Sutherland estate, reorganised their lands to reflect their perception of a more efficient method of land use, a trend that often entailed the resettlement of tenants from interior glens to marginal coastal lands, where the insufficient holdings of the newly created crofts required tenants to undertake a variety of employment in order to maintain rental payments and eke out a living. In many new crofting settlements, particularly those along the western coast of mainland Scotland and in the Western Isles, tenants were "encouraged" to participate in the collection and processing of kelp as a product necessary to the glass industry. As long as their endeavours remained profitable, at least for the landlord, in the favourable economic climate of the early decades of the nineteenth century, the industry represented a significant source of income for the estate, but after the decline of the market by 1820, the overgrown population at kelping centres contributed to the spreading poverty, overcrowding, and subsistence pressure that increasingly pervaded the Highlands during these years. In addition to kelp harvesting, the extra efforts of tenants were also frequently applied to nascent fishing industries, such as those at Helmsdale in Sutherland, despite the crofters' common lack of knowledge and experience in working and obtaining a living upon the sea. The representation of Highland fishing in paintings, particularly those that depict west-coast fishers and the more deprived characters involved in the industry, reflects the ongoing social legacy that emerged from the decades of Clearance upon the Highland economy and also

corresponds to the developing interest in subjects of rural labour and social realism that appeared in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Works by Scottish artists like Colin Hunter (1841-1904) and Joseph Henderson (1832-1908) as well as earlier drawings and illustrations by traveller William Daniell (1769-1837) serve to illuminate the role of this aspect of rural Highland labour within the nineteenth-century arts scene and continue to emphasise the ongoing linkage between landscape, labour, and painting that informed Highland works of the nineteenth century.

Perhaps the earliest depictions of the fishing and kelping industries in northern areas occur within the illustrative and documentary works of William Daniell, who in 1825 published an illustrated account of his journey around the north and northwest coasts of Scotland, which he commenced in 1814. Daniell's aquatints help trace his travels throughout the Highlands and Islands and also display his close observations of landscape, labour, and settlement patterns in this area, many parts of which had already witnessed Clearances events or were facing such resettlements and reorganisations in the years ahead.[52] As Daniell travelled though Sutherland, his illustration of the fishing village at Stathnaver (c.1813-14, plate 16) provides an insightful account of the ways utilised by local inhabitants to gain employment and income in the face of the Countess of Sutherland's ongoing attempts to "improve" and streamline the operation of her huge estate. The drawing, which was also reproduced for Richard Ayton's *A Voyage Round Great Britain* (1814-25), shows a shoreline scene of the fishermen's landing as a catch of fish is piled on the sand alongside small, open rowboats and barrels for preserving the fish. A line of cottages hedges the immediate shoreline while the furrowed rows of cultivated hillsides are visible in the surrounding terrain, evidence of the hardship and toil involved in the farming of

[52] Many of Daniell's illustrations, including those discussed and reproduced here, are included in the SCRAN online database.

coastal land. Within this single observant scene, Daniell managed to capture many elements of the changing labour and landscape that emerged, quite notably in Sutherland, as a result of Clearance-era evictions and resettlements. The removal of tenants to marginally productive coastal lands, where they pursued fishing activities to supplement the thin earning and subsistence granted by the indifferent productivity of shore lands, occupied a major place within the course of the Clearances throughout the Highlands, though differing in texture, timing, and extent in various areas. While evictions and resettlements on the Sutherland estate had commenced in the years prior to Daniell's travels, the chief, and most controversial, efforts at estate reorganisation began in earnest in 1814, as the Countess attempted to resettle the Strathnaver area. Daniell's illustration of the precariously placed fishing village on the coast absorbs and exhibits many of the land use and labour changes which had already emerged in the area and which would continue to shape the landscape in subsequent years.

Several other illustrations by Daniell also communicate the texture of life and labour within the Highlands and Islands shortly after the turn of the century. His travels through the Islands and into the north also produced the illustrations Gribun Head, Mull, c.1814 (plate 17) and Loch Duich, Ross-shire, c. 1814 (plate 18), both of which clearly show the coincidence of fishing and kelping industries in the Highlands. In the Mull example, Daniell depicts within the shelter of the sheer cliffs of the island's coastline a variety of boats pursuing both offshore and inshore fisheries, as the square-riggers were more suited to following shoals of herring out to sea and the smaller boats were primarily used for inshore efforts. The billowing plumes of smoke emanating from the immediate coast at the foot of the cliffs is evidence of kelp burning, yet another aspect of the rural economy that was particularly successful at

the time of Daniell's travels.[53] His work in Ross-shire also portrays a similar account of both fishing and kelping industries in these marginal coastal areas, a geographical feature that receives further emphasis from Daniell's depiction of the seemingly inhospitable coastal cliffs, which make more apparent the slim margin of habitable and cultivatable land available to coastal tenants as they expanded their efforts to exploit all available resources.

In later years, both fishing and kelping became increasingly popular subjects for Victorian artists. The theme of fishing served as the focus for the 1883 International Fisheries Exhibition, which was held in the South Kensington gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society, while the activities and functions of kelp harvesting occupied a slightly less prominent, though no less significant, place within the rural labour paintings of the nineteenth century.[54] The presence of kelp or kelp harvesters in paintings of the Highlands, while not necessarily perceived as evidence of landlord short-sightedness or misuse of tenant labour, nevertheless illustrate the marginal areas of labour that Highlanders were required to perform in order to gain income and subsistence from the perpetually disagreeable environmental and economic climates that suffused the area throughout the Clearance decades.[55] For example, among the three scenes of poverty that William Quiller Orchardson (1832-1910) painted for the 1876 Royal Academy was one work, Flotsam and Jetsam, that, according to the *Art-Journal*, evinced Orchardson's "melancholy touch...which shows itself...in the miserable, draggled woman that struggles on the seashore for what she can land" (*Art-*

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[53] The kelp industry and its depiction in Victorian painting will be covered in more detail below.
[54] The exhibition included a fine arts section that featured many fishing-related works by Scottish artists, including William McTaggart, whose Through Wind and Rain was one of three works to earn the artist a gold medal, as well as Joseph Henderson (1832-1908), Hugh Cameron (1835-1918), and Colin Hunter (1841-1904) (*Art-Journal* 1883 406, Errington 1989 80). McTaggart's painting depicts the area of Carradale in Kintyre, an area that, in comparison to more northerly fishing villages like Helmsdale, boasted a successful fishing industry due to its prime location within the migratory patterns of herring and to the area's proximity to Glasgow markets (Gray 1978 118).
[55] See the work of William Daniell, above.

Journal 1876 261).[56] Clearly, the association between kelp harvesting and the marginal environment of coastal Highland Scotland remained a potent reminder of the difficulty of labour amidst the ways of land holding in the Highlands. Even after the collapse of the major kelping industry in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, tenants continued to collect kelp for use in the still-surviving small market for the resource in the production of fine glass and as a source of iodine, evidence again of the marginality of both life and labour along Highland coasts (Rodee 104, Hunter 2000 74-75).

Other artists, including Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Joseph Henderson (1832-1908), Peter Macnab (fl. 1850s-60s), and Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896) also painted scenes of kelp harvesting in the Highlands that help to show the potency and popularity of the subject as one rich with the desirably marginal and nostalgic qualities of rural labour, a topic that received emphasis from the nature of the kelp industry, which had significantly waned by the time of its appearance in painting.[57] Hunter's 1879 work Their Only Harvest (plate 19) depicts men in a small open boat, silhouetted against a wide expanse of sea and sky, collecting seaweed from the water. This was a frequent subject for Hunter, as he contributed a similar onshore kelping scene, Lee Shore, to the same exhibition in 1879, leading the *Art-Journal* to compare the two works and to note that the "broad and masterly handling, luminosity, and truthfulness of colour" in Their Only Harvest had encouraged the Academy's purchase of the work (128). Later reviewers also noted Hunter's career-spanning identity as an artist who knew "how to make fishing boats picturesque" and a selection of titles belonging to his contributions to the Royal Academy's annual

[56] Although the location of this work is unknown, Rodee suggests that it depicts the harvesting of kelp and other seaborne items from the shore (104).
[57] One of the earliest painted depictions of seaweed collection, Gathering Sea-weed by English artist Frederick Richard Lee (1798-1879), was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1837.

exhibitions attests to this marine interest (*Art-Journal* 1883 220).[58] His work in Their Only Harvest juxtaposes the particulars of kelping labour, itself a highly specific livelihood emblematic of rural distress on the Highland coast, with the expansive surrounding seascape and consequently documents the interactions between labour and landscape. Henderson's painting, Kelp Burning (plate 20), was exhibited at the 1888 International Exhibition in Glasgow and depicts a step within the processing of kelp that rendered it a usable substance suitable for the making of glass.[59] In Henderson's image, three figures work at a large bonfire along a grassy shore, backed by the open sea and sky beyond. One woman adds more kelp to the blaze, which is surrounded by piles of seaweed and harvesting tools, while two other men, one of whom is almost blotted out by the smoke, assist in the harvesting and processing efforts. Overall, the work is still and static, lending a matter-of-fact, documentary aspect to Henderson's perspective on the scene that receives further emphasis from his impersonal depiction of the main figures and that places the focus of the painting on the specifics of kelping labour.

In the 1876 exhibition of the Royal Academy, the work Shearing Wraick on the Sound of Harris (plate 21) by Hamilton Macallum received favourable notice for its depiction of group of Highlanders harvesting seaweed and clearly shows the tools and techniques involved in the process. The work was reproduced by the *Art-Journal* in an article detailing Macallum's career to date in 1880 and the reviewer notes the importance of the kelp industry to the Highlands, both past and present:

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[58] These works include Digging for Bait at Daybreak (1876), Silver of the Sea (1880), and Lobster Fishers (1883).

[59] Interestingly, the same exhibition also included such renowned paintings of rural life, labour, and landscape as Sir David Wilkie's The Penny Wedding, Hard Times by Frank Holl, and Horatio McCulloch's Glencoe. Several of Erskine Nicol's paintings of tenuous tenants were shown, as was Thomas Faed's retrospective emigrant painting, Oh Why Left I My Hame?. Other paintings of rural life and the labouring poor included subjects like lobster fishing, potato harvesting, peat cutting, and fishing.

> To the inhabitants of the western shores of Scotland, the ingathering of this useful seaweed was—formerly more even than now—a most important season, for the manufacture of kelp...produced, not very long ago, the large sum of £200,000 annually. This kelp, as with many other marine algae, is rich in soda, potash, iodine, bromine, and substances used largely in manufacture" (Dafforne 150).[60]

The reviewer's easy association between Macallum's painting and the practise of the kelp industry in the Highlands highlights the close linkage this type of labour maintained to the area and its continuing, though diminished, role as an important sector of northern employment. Finally, the 1880 Royal Academy contribution by Macnab, The Return from the Shielings—A Scene in the Hebrides, "showed a group of barefoot women bent under the weight of the seaweed they carry on their backs, all within the usual gray and barren setting" (Rodee 104). The title of the work also makes a nostalgic reference to older ways of Highland land holding as shielings served as seasonal shelters for the men, women, and children who followed a community's cattle and sheep to summer grazing lands, which were often in higher terrain. The use of such communal grazing lands harks back to pre-Clearance times and serves as a reminder of the change in land use occasioned by the agricultural and pastoral estate reorganisations of the Clearances (Dodgshon 17-30). While his reference to shielings makes clear the setting of the work, perhaps Macnab's conflation of shielings with the kelp harvest also accentuates the nostalgia within his portrayal of the demise of several ways of rural labour in the Highlands. In this case, like the other later paintings of the dying kelp industry discussed above, the depiction of this particular type of rural labour relies upon the changing settlement and land use patterns that characterised the Clearance era and, in this context, the collection of

[60] Dafforne's article on Macallum also cites other examples of kelping and fishing subjects by the artist, including Carting Seaweed (1876), Burning Kelp (1876), and Herring Curers (1879).

seaweed receives greater prominence as a symbol of the labour legacy of the Clearances.

d. Illicit Whisky Distillation

The illicit distillation of whisky represents yet another category of rural labour within the Highlands that figured in nineteenth-century paintings of the era as an element that distinguishes the subsistence efforts of Highlanders within the changing economic and environmental conditions of the Clearance era. As mentioned above, the creation of whisky from grain allowed tenants the opportunity to convert available resources into cash in an effort to augment the already meagre incomes gleaned from other agricultural, pastoral, and piscatorial activities. It was also a way, akin to the harvesting of kelp in the early decades of the nineteenth century, to exploit natural resources, though kelp harvesting was a trend that was both covertly and overtly encouraged by landowners as many estate reorganisation forced tenants to marginal coastal lands in an effort to enter more fully into the then-profitable kelp industry (Dodgshon 117-118). Whisky distilling, on the other hand, remained a less favoured aspect of rural labour as many landlords sought to eradicate illicit activities and concentrate efforts into legitimate distilleries throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth in an attempt to redirect a greater flow of resources and cash into their own coffers (Dodgshon 117, Hunter 2000 91, Devine 1994 130-133). Illicit distilleries, however, continued to flourish for a time and the image of the illegal stills in paintings by Sir Edwin Landseer and Sir David Wilkie became synonymous with the texture of rural labour, lifestyle, and poverty during the Clearance era, again reflecting the legacy of the Clearances within the livelihoods and material surroundings of tenants.

Landseer's 1826-29 work An Illicit Whisky Still in the Highlands (also known as Highland Whisky Still, plate 22) was one of the earliest examples of the subject to appear in the nineteenth-century art world and demonstrates the concurrent interest in Highland subjects, but also illuminates the economic conditions that stemmed from events of the Clearance era and that continued to influence Highland ways of life during much of the century. In the course of his career, Landseer travelled throughout the Highlands, relating his observations and experiences into a series of images depicting the inhabitants and their ways of life, and therefore gained some familiarity with the texture of rural life and landscape in the area, leading him to observe in an 1866 letter: "There were but one or two really well managed *Deer Forests in the Highlands* and no *railroads*, but lots of whisky stills and Poachers to be found" (Ormond 1981 70). Within this short statement to a correspondent, Landseer reveals his keen observation of Highland land use, noting, with some foresight, the presence (certainly an expanding one) of a couple of successful deer forests as well as the lack of railroads at the time. The whisky stills and poachers that he evidently found in abundance also attest to the artist's notice of the Highlanders' need for the exploitation of all resources, without regard for the legality of such activities.

The painting that predates these words portrays such an endeavour in the form of an illicit whisky operation (headed, incidentally, by a poacher) and provides insight into the function and perception of this type of rural labour in the Highlands of the first half of the nineteenth century. The illicit distillation of whisky at this time was symptomatic, and symbolic, of the changing economic and agricultural structures of the Clearance era, as the tenantry pursued all available avenues to increase income (Devine 1994 130-133). Landseer's unmistakably Highland landscape forms the background to the domestic scene in which the distiller/poacher gathers with his two

young children in the dooryard of a tumbledown thatched hut, which houses the distilling apparatus as well as two further figures involved in the distilling operation. The workings of the still appear out of the gloom of the structure, perhaps revealing Landseer's encounters with the process during his Highland travels, and, along with the collected poaching paraphernalia and quarries, vividly elucidate the source of livelihood for the central figure and his family.[61] Signs of the family's economic struggles grow increasingly apparent upon closer inspection as the barefoot children and scanty provisions attest to the scarcity of material belongings and lasting subsistence pressures. As seen in Wilkie's earlier works of rent collection, Landseer's meticulous inclusion of these details, like the shepherding paraphernalia on the left side of the work and the half-consumed makings of a dinner in the centre, serves to elucidate fully the conditions of the "domestic" scene while the gathered dogs mirror, and enhance, the expressions of the human figures, as the small white dog near the young girl echoes her forlorn glance at the poacher and another dog meaningfully eyes both the empty whisky glass and its drinker. Furthermore, Landseer's deployment of a set-like backdrop and other, larger props helps to define the space of the picture and lends the work the immediacy of the theatre, albeit at close range (Ormond 2005 59-61).

While many viewers read the painting as a moral lesson on the evils of alcohol and illegal activities, particularly upon the lives of children, or as a humorous glimpse into the lifestyle of the stereotypical shiftless Highlander, the work nevertheless asserts the difficulties of wresting a livelihood from the Highland landscape (Ormond 1981 70). The fact that Landseer encountered numerous whisky stills on his tour of the Highlands is a result of Clearance-era economic conditions requiring the use of all

[61] There is some debate regarding the relationship that links the main characters of Landseer's scene and, most recently, Ormond asserts that "there is no explicit story" within the work and that "there have been various readings of the ambiguous relationships between the figures" (Ormond 2005 66).

available natural resources to supplement thin rural earnings. Landseer's careful depiction of the inner workings of the still and the apparent need for many rural inhabitants, like those depicted in the work and described in his letter, to undertake similar illegal occupations, including poaching, to eke out a living during the shifting economic and environmental conditions that informed his work, illustrate the driving role of material poverty in directing the labour activities of the Clearance-era Highlands.

In addition to Landseer's painting, two related works by Wilkie, The Scottish Whisky Still (1819, plate 23) and The Irish Whiskey Still (1835-40, plate 24), demonstrate the currency of the whisky distilling subject in early-nineteenth-century art. While the two artists similarly included contextual details and expressive canines to provide a wealth of visual clues to enhance the scene and also employed stage-like compositional techniques to define the painted space, their impressions of the whisky industry, both legal and illegal, remain quite distinct.[62] Unlike the still in Landseer's painting, Wilkie's Scottish still is a legal operation, which he had visited during a sojourn in the Highlands, and his work accordingly portrays a "small but well swept and orderly factory being run by a smartly dressed highlander and two neat assistants" (Errington 1975 22; see also Tromans 82, Ormond 2005 60-61).[63] The natural light and visibly well-ordered distillery, complete with clean glassware, barrels, and still, contrasts sharply with Wilkie's later work treating the theme of whisky within an Irish setting. The illicit context and atmosphere of Wilkie's Irish work continues in the vein of Landseer's work, which Wilkie presumably viewed prior to painting his own

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[62] Landseer possessed great enthusiasm for the stage, often participating in theatricals and organising *tableaux-vivants*, much like Wilkie (Ormond 2005 59). The two artists also shared a shrewd business sense and fully exploited the printmaking industry to amass viewers and buyers for their images (Ormond 2005 101). Ormond emphasises the importance of Wilkie's art and career in the development of Landseer's Highland images and notes that, "judging by the tone of the few surviving letters between them, the two artists were well disposed towards each other" (2005 60-61).

[63] In Tromans' publication, this work bears the title A Highland Whisky Still at Lochgilphead.

version (Errington 1975 22). The illegal Irish still, much like its Highland counterpart, displays its full assortment of pipes and furnace, but occupies a central and highly visible place within Wilkie's composition, unlike the shrouded location of the Scottish still in Landseer's work. The distiller's family likewise gathers round the apparatus in an interior space, though their "picturesque beauty" and "radiant good health" belie the supposedly impoverished conditions that led rural inhabitants to undertake illegal schemes of whisky distillation in Ireland (Errington 1975 22).[64] Clearly, Wilkie's interest in the picturesque qualities of the distilling scene superseded his notice of the poverty that underlies such an operation, with the exception of the bedraggled old man on the right side of the work who Errington maintains was an afterthought and not part of Wilkie's original conception of the painting (1975 22). In fact, Wilkie found that the substandard living conditions in the west of Ireland added to the charming and picturesque nature of the area, writing in a letter that "the whole economy of the people furnishes the elements of the picturesque" and that "as their good qualities must lead to future improvement, their present most simple and pastoral conditions, if properly recorded must in all time be a subject of legitimate interest to the painter, the poet and the historian" (Errington 1975 21). The resulting painting mediates these conditions to an end that successfully conveys the picturesque interest of the distilling lifestyle in Ireland while also centralising the explicitly illegal still within the work.

Wilkie's successful elision of the Irish distiller's destitution and his neat portrayal of an undoubtedly rare legal distillery (in comparison to the more numerous illegal examples available to him at the time) in Scotland set apart more plainly the

[64] Errington points out that, though many of Wilkie's contemporaries, including his biographer Allan Cunningham, read this work as a moral message denouncing the evils of drink, the odd composition and non-linear placement of figures, along with the centrally located still and its vividly depicted attributes, display the artist's pleasure in painting the picturesque rural scene (Errington 1975 21-23).

differing circumstances inherent in Landseer's rendering of a similar topic in a Highland context. Landseer's shadowy depiction of the components of the still and his understated, yet unmistakable, inclusion of signs of the distiller's poverty within the Highland environment illustrates more clearly the role of illicit distillation in the Clearance-era landscape. The economic forces and resource pressures that grew from and extended beyond the events of the Clearances informs and underlies the necessary undertaking of illegal distilling activities, alongside those of poaching and other forms of legal rural labour, in the nineteenth-century Highlands.

e. Agriculture and Other Forms of Rural Labour

The practise of agriculture and other types of rural work constitute another category of labour that evolved as a result of the economic and subsistence changes of the Clearance era and that influenced the Highlands throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. As land holdings shifted across the landscape, tenants' ways of employing arable areas and other allotted spaces changed to reflect the altered economic and environmental conditions of the times, frequently shifting focus from a communally based mixture of livestock and crops to a more marginal, individual method of subsistence and cultivation. As discussed above, tenants often faced the necessary task of undertaking a variety of labours to augment their crofting income and to meet rental requirements, a trend that included involvement in areas of employment like fishing, kelp harvesting, and whisky distillation. Other fields of labour, such as peat cutting and hay making, had been pursued in the Highlands for many decades prior to the Clearances, but received shifting emphasis as Clearance progressed and the material wealth of the area altered according to market values. These areas of rural employment, as depicted in works by artists like Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), among others, take on greater significance within the context

of the Clearance landscape in the artists' portrayals of changing ways of labour within the Highlands, but remain apolitical, like the previously discussed paintings of rural labour. Even without a political motivation, however, the works contain the embedded legacy of the Clearances in their scenes of the Highland landscape and labour that emerged during the era. For example, Sir Edwin Landseer's The Stonebreaker (1830), which sensitively pictures an aged and broken Highland labourer within a changing rural landscape, is not equal to the politically charged figures in Gustave Courbet's later work of the same name which relies on a vastly different urban context to function as a potent image of rural labour. Notwithstanding this comparison, these paintings of Highland agricultural labours, like the previous images of Highland land use and rural employment, portrays the modifications within the landscape that grew from the sweeping environmental and economic changes that pervaded the Highlands during and well after the Clearance era.

As interest in social realist works grew through the Victorian era, artists increasingly turned to the Highlands, towards depictions of agricultural activities and other subsistence practises, which inherently memorialised the land use changes that stemmed from the Clearances. Lost works like Peat-Stacking in Ross-shire (1880) by Duncan Cameron (1837-1916) portrayed a type of labour that had existed within the Highlands well prior to the Clearances, but which adopted new layers of significance as more rural inhabitants were faced with growing pressure on resources, provisions, and materials. Cameron's apparent depiction of the process of peat stacking in the Highlands reflects not only increasing artistic interest in the labour of the area, but also forges a link to changing subsistence practises as Highlanders dealt with growing rent payments and decreasing abilities to meet living expenses within materially reduced conditions. Furthermore, the 1878 work Haymaking in the Highlands by

Hamilton Macallum continues this trend in its portrayal of "new hay being loaded onto a boat on one of the Hebridean islands" (Hardie 73), an activity that emphasises the islanders' attempts to glean as much benefit and income as possible from the available resources surrounding them, an endeavour made even more crucial during the frequently overcrowded and destitute living conditions that swept the islands during the middle of the nineteenth century. Other works by Macallum share this interest in documenting the lives of the labouring poor within the landscape of the Highlands and titles like Cutting Peats (1872) and Digging Potatoes (1872) attest to this interest that sustained the artist's career (Dafforne 149-151). Macallum's works occupy a documentary position in regard to the depicted labour and, to reiterate Hardie's words, "this type of documentary transcript of life in the remoter parts of Scotland was appreciated more as social history than as art" (73).[65] In the artists' well-observed renderings of rural labour in the Highlands, the changing resources and systems of land use that extended from the Clearances maintain a quiet, but definite, role within the painted landscape.

To step slightly backwards in time, Sir Edwin Landseer's The Stone Breaker (1830, plate 25) takes a similar stance regarding the place of rural labour within the landscape, and the toll it exacted upon Highland labourers, and marks a clear precedent for the later images of agricultural labour discussed above. In the work, an elderly and worn stone breaker sits stiffly alongside the tools of his trade, awaiting the lunch brought to him by his granddaughter, whose healthy and youthful appearance creates a sharp contrast to the aged labourer. The pair rests amidst the collected paraphernalia of the old man's labours, including a hammer and sieve, as well as the evidence of his hard work in the form of crushed and yet unbroken rocks, which

[65] See also Macallum's fishing and kelping subjects, above.

presumably imply the continuance and tedium of his efforts in the building of a road in the Highlands. The typically mountainous Highland landscape that surrounds the two figures and the humble cottages in the background definitively place the scene in the rural countryside and lend greater credence to Landseer's portrayal of the incursion of new sources of employment that moved into the area during and after the Clearance era. His characterisation of this labour as backbreaking, defeating, and tedious, as evinced by the worker's posture, appearance, and tools, and the gradually changing landscape represented by the man's presence within the countryside as a road builder, demonstrate a sensitive understanding of the implications of shifting economies in rural areas, like the Highlands.[66] While the contrast between the granddaughter, whose freshness connects her to a nostalgic view of traditional landscapes and ways of life, and the decrepit stone breaker, whose role in industry intrudes upon the countryside, seems slightly obvious and sentimental, Landseer's interest in the scene and his portrayal of the effects of changing labour traditions on both people and landscape are notable and influential. As in the artist's depictions of cattle droving and illicit whisky distilling, the implicit presence of deteriorating material conditions and market forces effectively forms the backdrop to the scene of Highland labour.

The subject and title of Landseer's work necessarily call up other well known images of stone breakers, namely, those by Victorian artists John Brett (1830-1902), Henry Wallis (1830-1916), and, of course, Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), all of which generate valuable comparisons with Landseer's The Stone Breaker in their depictions of rural labour as well as in their political and social significance. Brett's The Stone-

[66] Interestingly, Hunter points out that road building as a source of employment and income had declined by mid-century, as the major construction campaign commenced in 1803 had ended, adding greater weight to the declining fortunes of rural Highlanders and re-emphasising the shifting role of this type of labour within the landscape (2000 91).

Breaker (1858, plate 26) "was characterized by Ruskin as 'a boy hard at work on his heap in the morning'" while the corresponding work by Wallis, also painted in 1858 and exhibited at the same Academy show as Brett's work, portrays the lifeless body of a dead worker, exhausted by the miserable tedium and backbreaking effort of his labours (Treuherz 1987 36-38). Although nineteenth-century critics (and many twentieth-century art historians) focused on the landscape component of Brett's work, the subject of stonebreaking as the harshest form of labour and the boy's steadfast attitude in pursuance of his work, which necessarily prevents him from enjoyment of the surrounding countryside, combine to illuminate the artist's intentions to imbue the work with a greater profundity of "religious and social significance" than generally credited to the painting (Hickox/Payne 99).[67] Wallis employed noticeably more overt methods in his painting as the dead stonebreaker sits slumped, almost as if resting, within a still and highly detailed English landscape that lends a poignant intimacy to the scene (Treuherz 1987 37, plate 27). Despite these attributes, the painting received a wide variety of criticism for its overt portrayal of the dead labourer and the implications this held towards the functioning of the working class labour economy as well as the state's administration of relief. Treuherz observes that the work was, "at once, recognised as a powerful general statement about the 'condition of England' and a criticism of the Poor Law" and that, due to its frank illustration of death, it "outraged many" (1987 36-37). A critic from the *Athenaeum* accordingly noted, "This may be a protest against the Poor Law—against a social system that makes the workhouse or stonebreaking the end of the model peasant; but it may also be a mere attempt to excite and to startle by the poetically horrible" (*Athenaeum* 1858 567). With these words, the reporter acknowledges both the political content of Wallis'

[67] See also Staley/Newall (176-77) and Pointon (94-98).

subject and composition as well as the lingering nostalgia still harboured by the art world for the seemingly erstwhile ideal peasant. Wallis' topical content and his blunt treatment of the subject within the painting, which alternately evoked anger and sadness in viewers, contrast sharply with Landseer's vastly more subdued and idealised version of the stonebreaker's life but also illustrate, nevertheless, the early significance Landseer lent to the subject of rural labour within a changing landscape.

In spite of the reactions garnered by Wallis' treatment of stonebreaking, the subject was not a particularly new one in the 1850s, nor was it modern territory for Courbet, who painted his infamous work of the same name in 1848 (T.J.Clark 1973 79). It was, instead, Wallis' depiction and characterisation of the dead stonebreaker and the currency of the subject at the time that provoked such heated comments from viewers, a trend that was rooted in the hostile reception of Courbet's The Stonebreakers (plate 28), throwing into further contrast the earlier Highland image produced by Landseer. The function of Courbet's work within both rural and urban spheres, as well as his use of labour imagery and stylistic choices, demonstrates the political import his work held for audiences of France, and more particularly Paris, around 1850. Throughout his influential work on Courbet and the Second French Republic, T.J. Clark argues that Courbet's paintings of the period, which include The Stonebreakers as well as Burial at Ornans (1849-50) and Peasants of Flagey Returning from the Fair (c. 1855), carried within their seemingly rural imagery and subject matter a variety of emotive, highly ambiguous, and infuriating implications for urban viewers, who found much to fear in the three works. The Stonebreakers, for example, is a deceptively simple image on a grand scale that conveys an ambiguous view of movement and action as well as the nature of work within the stiffened figures of the two men working along the road (T.J. Clark 1973 79-80). This labour is anonymous,

as the men have turned their backs to the audience, and is captured as it progresses, unlike the pauses represented by the lunching stonebreaker in Landseer and the dead worker in Wallis (T.J. Clark 1973 79-80). Clark posits that while the idea of rural labourers seemingly fits within the imagery of the French countryside, particularly as Courbet actively associated himself with rural areas and lifestyles, The Stonebreakers carried far more import to urban audiences, where it drew upon contemporary urban fears about countryside unrest and the dangers it posed to civic and national stability (1973 88-96). Courbet's painting rested upon a background of land hunger and unrest in rural areas as expanding markets altered the way in which land was bought, sold, and cultivated. These trends, coupled with expanding populations and increasing pressures on available resources, fed existing urban fears of political organisation and continued unrest in the countryside and lent Courbet's work a heightened significance within urban circles (Clark 1973 88-96). Clearly, Courbet meant The Stonebreakers to hurt, to use Clark's term, in a city context and to capitalise on the existing economic, social, and political worries that gripped Paris at the time of its exhibition.

When Landseer's The Stone Breaker, and even Wallis' version with its more apparent political implications, are compared to Courbet's work in this respect, it is clear that the earlier image by Landseer does not carry a strong message about the potential social or political effects of changing labour within the countryside. Both works rely upon the economic crises facing the countryside and the changes in land use necessarily entailed by such change, but the opinion that each work conveys about rural life is vastly different. The approach to labour and landscape change in Landseer's painting exhibits an observant, descriptive, and gentler character, like the other Highland labour images discussed above, than the more unconcealed portrayal

of work in Courbet's version.[68] As discussed above, Landseer's worker pauses to accept a lunch from his youthful and healthy granddaughter amidst an idyllic, although obviously changing, Highland countryside, qualities that are far from the mechanical, anonymous, and dehumanising characterisation of stonebreaking in Courbet's work. This portrayal of a conventional Highland countryside fits neatly within the existing body of landscape art that appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century and the area's evident amenability to the taming effects of labour allows the work to maintain an apolitical stance in spite of the notoriously harsh type of employment undertaken by the central figure.[69] As a result, the appearance and reception of Landseer's painting within the London art world remained distinctly mild in comparison to the escalating responses of anger and criticism garnered by Courbet's work as it progressed from rural exhibition venues towards Dijon and thence onwards to larger Parisian audiences (Clark 1973 121-127). Despite these fundamental differences in tone and intent, The Stone Breaker of 1830 nevertheless sensitively documents the changes wrought in both life and landscape throughout the Highlands as a result of Clearance-era "improvements" and reorganisations.

f. Rural Poverty within the Highland Landscape

Landseer's observation of landscape and rural life in the nineteenth-century Highlands extends from the depiction of cattle droving, whisky distillation, and stone breaking to the portrayal of cottage interiors and other scenes of Highland life that illustrate the general texture of poverty that was common throughout the area during and well after the Clearances. Other later Victorian artists, like John MacWhirter (1838-1911) and Peter Graham (1836-1921), likewise painted instances of rural

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[68] Bermingham makes a further comparison between the stonebreaking paintings by Wallis, Brett, and Courbet to a much earlier illustration of this type of labour by George Walker. Walker's picturesque work (c. 1814) throws into more vivid contrast the social content and rural perspective available in the later works (Bermingham 185-191).

[69] These landscape traditions will be discussed in Chapter VI.

poverty, particularly as the interest in social realist subjects increased through the middle of the century. These works, in the manner of the previously discussed paintings of specific types of rural labour, capture the legacy of the Clearances in the Highlands, in terms of destitution, unemployment, and dispossession. Although these subjects were also common to paintings of non-Highland countrysides, their appearance within a Scottish context heightens the works' acknowledgement of the economic hardships and widespread destitution that emerged as a product and driving force of the Clearances.

The artistic interest in scenes of Highland poverty during the nineteenth century received inspiration and widespread attention through accounts of periodic famine conditions and general destitution that began appearing more frequently in news sources and other publications from mid-century. These sources, in the midst of the Clearances and famine of the mid-nineteenth century, provided readers with glimpses into the destitute conditions of Highland life through descriptions of crofters' residences, known as blackhouses, and other conditions of northern life.[70] Throughout his summer travels in Skye, Alexander Smith, writing in 1851, describes the dwellings of Highlanders and, though he recognises that the blackhouses are not "model edifices" as they are draughty, smoky, dark, and leaky and that the stone furnishings make for rude accommodations, he nevertheless writes of the huts' ability to nestle into the landscape and to create a suitable environment for inhabitants (A. Smith 316). Overall, Smith's discussion of Highland living conditions, within a work that greatly influenced the artists of the day (Irwin 356), provided readers with a detailed account of everyday life in the north and also illustrated the ways in which

[70] The dwelling, with its central turf fire on a packed earthen floor, was quite dark, sooty, and smoky and was frequently criticised in the press as a place that demonstrated the perceived poor living habits of native Highlanders.

such a lifestyle and its physical manifestations could be viewed as part of the rural landscape that emerged from the Clearances.

The depiction of rural Highland poverty and its quiet acknowledgement of the alterations in living conditions in the area become apparent in the works of many mid-century artists, including Henry Bright (c. 1810-1873) and John MacWhirter. In his 1856 painting entitled A Croft in the Mountains (plate 29), English artist Bright depicts a crumbling crofthouse amidst an expansive northern landscape. The jagged and misty slopes of the distant mountain as well as the rushing streams, quiet loch, and ubiquitous boulders, carry on the picturesque tradition established by the landscape artists of the turn of the century as the terrain is rugged and essentially deserted except for the dwelling, cow, and human figure in the foreground. The crofthouse and its associated buildings are visibly old and crumbling structures that, in their physical and visual similarity to the surrounding boulders and mountains, become almost a natural outcropping of the rocky landscape. Although the structures seem to be rather neglected, the presence of a waterwheel and other signs of modest prosperity, the cosy hearth smoke and the various items in the yard, for example, demonstrate that the inhabitants are not as impoverished as might first be assumed. Even the presence of the cow, with its inherent value as a food source and commodity, alludes to the relative security of the croft inhabitants. Notwithstanding Bright's inclusion of these elements into his scene of remote Highland life, the work's simple depiction of the croft inherently memorialises the shift in land use and holdings that occurred in many Highland areas during the Clearances as a large-scale crofting landscape emerged as a product of estate reorganisations.[71] These

[71] Morrison also notes these seeming contradictions in an 1873 croft painting by Peter Graham and, while he recognises the import of the crofting landscape within the context of Clearance-era painting, he nevertheless criticises the work for its inaccurate depiction of "picturesque peasantry" and its seemingly contradictory portrayal of a rather more abundant croft (2005 102). I would argue, however,

fundamental changes, both physical and conceptual, in the texture of the land, and Bright's depiction of a crofthouse, reflect the ongoing legacy of the Clearance era in the habitation and appearance of the landscape, as well as the frequent instances of hardship that the crofting lifestyle entailed (Hunter 2000 68-71).

MacWhirter likewise illuminates this aspect of the crofting landscape and the poverty of rural inhabitants in his 1867 work Breezy Day, Arran (plate 30), which portrays the poor crofting population of Arran, an island off the western coast of Scotland which witnessed very early Clearances in the late eighteenth century as the landlord, the Duke of Hamilton, attempted to remove all traces of communal farming in favour of establishing a system of "enclosed agriculture with increased rents" (Richards 2000 61). The estate reorganisations continued into the late 1820s, when, Richards recounts, "the entire island was converted, apart from a few spots in the north and north-west" to sheep runs (2000 61).[72] Despite these tumultuous reorganisations of the island's population, Arran remained a popular locale for tourists and artists throughout the nineteenth century due to its well-established reputation as a salubrious rural resort and its easy accessibility from urban centres like Glasgow and Greenock. Steamships regularly plied this route to the island as early as 1825 and transport was further eased as the rail network grew through the 1860s (W. Mackenzie 243, McLellan 190). A work of 1856, Sketching on the Coast of Arran (plate 31) by Benjamin Williams Leader (1831-1923), portrays this increasing touristic and artistic interest in its portrayal of an artist working *en plein air*, nearly absorbed by the

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picturesque poverty aside, that the simple act of painting and naming the crofting landscape is inherently notable as an acknowledgement of Clearance-induced changes within the land holding systems of the Highlands. Whatever "realistic" elements of rural distress not included by the artists heightens the works' appeal to their audience and are, in their absence, as Barrell argues, equally symbolic of the aesthetic conventions of the times as they are of the economic state of the Highlands.

[72] Richards goes on to report that by 1829, the transformation of Arran "was accompanied by an offer from the landlord to pay half the fares of the displaced tenantry to Upper Canada, together with the offer of 100 acres of colonial land from the government. Eventually seventeen families took advantage of this offer" (2000 61). See also Little for further Clearance and emigration history of Arran.

surrounding grassy cliffs, massed boulders, and calm waters.[73] MacWhirter's painting, on the other hand, silently recognises this changed landscape of private, rented crofts in the midst of expanding areas dedicated to sheep pasturage. The primary figures in his scene, like the surrounding dwellings, evince a tired and worn-out quality that attests to their difficulty in eking out a living as MacWhirter vividly conveyed the weariness of the horse and the attendant crofter as well as the dilapidation of the crofthouses with their sagging thatch and aged stone walls. The inhabitants' struggle is enhanced by the dark and almost stormy landscape that surrounds the people and their dwellings as the picturesque mountains in the background, with their sheer, black slopes and cloud cover, enclose the scene and lend a sense of foreboding to the painting. Again, the crofting landscape and the visible poverty of the inhabitants of this area of Arran commemorate the lasting effects of the Clearances as boundary lines and land use patterns shifted to reflect the economic aspirations of landlords and their interaction with market forces.

In addition to his work on the crofting landscape, MacWhirter also produced paintings that portray the dispossessed and destitute within the Clearance landscape, a theme that grew more common during and after mid-century and that continued to echo the ongoing struggles of Highlanders. His later works Spindrift (plate 32) and Sunday in the Highlands (plate 33), which were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1876 and 1881, portrayed "a number of people, at the head of whom is an old man on a grey pony, returning from the kirk along the seashore" and captured "a grey horse

[73] The artist's comfortable place in the coastal landscape is clear in Leader's work and illustrates the easy popularity of Arran for artists and tourists. See Halliwell for other examples of the many paintings of the island, by artists as diverse as William Dyce (1806-1864) and John Knox (1778-1845). Halliwell also illustrates another work by MacWhirter, Harvesting in Arran (1866), which portrays the hay harvest, as well as The Isle of Arran, Cattle Watering by a Watermill (1884) by Henry Bright and Thomas Sidney Cooper (1803-1902), a painting that portrays the more distressed material conditions of Arran crofting population amidst a sweeping mountainous landscape. Although these examples will not be discussed further in this thesis, they nevertheless continue to exemplify the accessibility and popularity of the west-coast islands as a subject for Victorian artists at the same time as the rural distress of the Clearance era visibly affected the living conditions of the area.

and a seaweed-laden cart coming along the beach during a stormy day with the spindrift driving over the surface of the sea" in Arran, respectively (*Art Journal* 1881 216; 1876 263). Both works evince a dreary picture of rural life within equally difficult surroundings. Similarly, Charles M'Bryde (fl. 1870s) illuminated the distressed circumstances and hardship of Highlanders in his work Wanderer (1878). In the *Art-Journal* review, M'Bryde's effort, which was exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1878, prompted the following praise:

> We must not omit a passing eulogium on Charles M'Bryde's 'Wanderer.' The simple story is touchingly indicated in the weary, worn look of the female who has fallen back exhausted by the wayside with the baby asleep on her knee, and the little bundle dropped on the ground at her feet. (1878 115)

As the reviewer notes, the work clearly captures the repercussions of rural poverty and dispossession.

Other examples by Peter Graham, James Archer, and Erskine Nicol, namely, Homewards (1872, plate 34), Desolate (1870) and Lonely Tenant of the Glen (1878), communicate the difficulty and loneliness of labour as well as the despair of homelessness. Graham's work elicited a long response from the *Art-Journal* reviewer, who cautioned readers:

> Such a landscape as "Homewards" may disappoint those who have nerved themselves to encounter nothing from the easel of this painter save the wild and weird phenomena of nature. Here we have simply an aged field-labourer, returning home in the evening after his toil, mounted on one of his horses and crossing a shallow river. (1872 182)

Homewards, in its portrayal of a few destitute residents within an equally desolate and deserted landscape, communicates a bleak prospect of the Highland landscape and the difficulty of maintaining a living in such austere, and visibly under-populated,

surroundings. Archer's work likewise portrays "a solitary forsaken one crouching on the cold, wide moor" while Nicol's work received notice for its depiction of the tenant "going home with a bundle of firewood and withered bracken on her back" and for its "character and quiet pathos" (*Art-Journal* 1870 97; *Art-Journal* 1878 165). Alongside the additional significance of Nicol's title and its overt links to the sparse settlement of Highland glens, the dreary and often deserted appearance of the landscape in such works forms a suitable background for the depiction of countryside distress and rural labour. The works consequently form part of the ongoing Victorian interest in rural poverty, labour, and dispossession, a theme that received full appreciation for its ability to evoke pathos and sentiment in viewers. In the illustration of these rural difficulties and surroundings, the paintings by Graham, Archer, and Nicol, among others, also relate closely to the place of the Clearances in influencing the appearance and habitability of the Highland landscape.

Overall, the portrayal of this landscape and its attendant inclusion of the shifting settlement patterns and ways of land use that emerged from the Clearance era illustrates the ways in which contemporary painted depictions of landscape and lifestyle within the Highlands concurrently contain the legacy of the era. Paintings of rural labour in the northern and coastal climes of Scotland, an area that witnessed changes in economic and demographic structures throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, not only demonstrate the expanding interest in poverty and labour as subject for painting but also convey the avenues through which the environment reflected these livelihoods. While these paintings do not contain a strong political or moral message about the condition of the poor in rural Scotland, the subjects and landscapes of the assembled works nevertheless offer a description of the sweeping changes that profoundly altered the texture of the landscape. As

Highlanders faced the challenges that accompanied the waves of expanding sheep farming and that attached to many landlords' estate resettlement efforts, their employment shifted to reveal a wider range of resources, such as fish and kelp, that could be used to supplement increasingly meagre incomes and limited employment opportunities. Works by artists like Daniell, Landseer, Macallum, and many others clearly portray these changing lifestyles as well as the sustained after-effects of the Clearances within the Highland landscape, trends that received further treatment by artists working on subjects of emigration and the deserted landscape, both additional themes of Clearance legacy embedded in the Highland environment that are covered in the following chapters.

Chapter V
Emigration: Leaving the Land

In the 1773 account of his tour through the Hebrides, traveller James Boswell noted the swelling enthusiasm for emigration harboured by the island's inhabitants, gleaning the following observations from a rural gathering:

> In the evening the company danced as usual. We performed, with much activity, a dance which, I suppose, the emigration from Skye has occasioned. They call it *America*. Each of the couples, after the common involutions and evolutions, successively whirls round in a circle, till all are in motion, and the dance seems intended to show how emigration catches, till a whole neighbourhood is set afloat. (Boswell 327)

Despite his otherwise indignant attitude toward the Highlanders' "rage for emigration" (Bray 102), Boswell's descriptions of the rural interest in emigration and the increasingly tempting pull that it operated within Highland communities are frequently cited in modern discussions of the role of emigration within the course of Clearance history.[74] Interestingly, other eyewitness accounts of Highland emigration that appear with similar frequency in contemporary studies include written sketches of pathetic scenes of emigrant departures, generally accompanied by descriptions of the sounds of tearful leave-takings and mournful bagpipes as well as the sights of emigrant ships and the last glimpses of Scotland. For example, in 1853, geologist Archibald Geikie wrote of his observance of an emigration of tenants from Boreraig and Suisnish on Skye, echoing the sentiments of many earlier witnesses of emigrant scenes:

> On gaining the top of one of the hills on the south side of the valley [of Strathsuardal], I could see a long and motley procession winding along the road that led north from Suisnish. It halted at the point of the road

[74] See Hunter 1994 (39), Bumsted (1), and Fry (131), for example.

> opposite Kilbride, and there the lamentation became long and loud.... It was a miscellaneous gathering of at least three generations of crofters. There were old men and women, too feeble to walk, who were placed in carts; the younger members of the community, on foot, were carrying their bundles of clothes and household effects, while the children, with looks of alarm, walked alongside...Everyone was in tears...and it seemed as if they could not tear themselves away. When they set forth once more, a cry of grief went up to heaven, the long plaintive wail, like a funeral coronach,[75] was resumed, and after the last of the emigrants had disappeared behind the hill, the sound seemed to re-echo through the whole wide valley of Strath in one prolonged note of desolation. The people were on their way to be shipped to Canada. I have often wandered since then over the solitary ground of Suisnish. Not a soul is to be seen there now, but the greener patches of field and the crumbling walls mark where an active and happy community once lived. (Richards 2000 2, Hunter 2000 130)

The contrast between these two divergent, but frequently cited, portrayals of emigration in the late-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries illustrates the central issues of the ongoing debate surrounding the causes and character of emigration from the Highlands and Islands during the Clearance era. One strand, as prefaced by the words of Boswell, portrays emigration as a choice operating within Highland communities and in tandem with the social and economic forces that shaped lifestyles of the period. The contagious character and lively activity of emigration fever in this context highlight the intending emigrants' agency, choice, and aspirations in the decision to depart from Skye. In the second perspective of emigration, observers elucidate the more romantic and pathetic notions of Highland departures by emphasising the emotion, reluctance, and inevitability that characterise the scene,

[75] A coronach is a Highland dirge that often figures into both written and painted descriptions of emigration from the Highlands during this era. Paintings of such scenes commonly include a piper and George W. Simson's 1859 work, A Coronach in the Backwoods, employs the same theme in its portrayal of Scottish immigrants in Canada.

sometimes also obscuring the actions of landlords and tenants within the economic and political context that ostensibly precipitated the actions of emigration. As demonstrated in the paintings discussed later in the chapter, both perspectives played an active and visible role in the development and portrayal of Highland emigration during the nineteenth century.

While these dissimilarities in observation certainly derive a portion of their differences from the ever-changing texture of emigration throughout the Clearance era, the views expressed by the authors also illuminate a central rift in contemporary historical discussions of the nature of emigration against the background of the Clearances: namely, the disagreement surrounding the operation of push and pull factors in tenant departures, such as the role of landlordism and the opportunities and prospects available in the colonies; the degree of choice available to the émigrés; and the role of economic and material impoverishment in driving the Highland emigration of the Clearance era. Historians such as Eric Richards, T.M. Devine, James Hunter, J.M. Bumsted, and Marjory Harper, among many others, have continued to wrestle with these issues in their analyses of the function of emigration within the course of the Clearances and the effects of the exodus on both the Highlands and the emigrants' intended destinations.[76] Out of the differing viewpoints and interpretations presented by these historians, readers gain a multifaceted perspective on the chronicle of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century emigration that serves to highlight the complexities involved in gaining access to, and making sense of, the subject.

However, despite the centrality and visibility of emigration within the larger context of the Clearances as well as the importance accorded it by many of the

[76] See Fry 2005 for a very recent contribution to the academic fray surrounding Clearance history. His book generated debate months before its publication in July 2005. Refer, for example, to the *Sunday Herald* (6 March 2005, 3) and Fry's article, "Clearances? What Clearances?" in the *Scottish Review of Books*.

aforementioned historians, it is inaccurate to assume that emigration and Clearance can be lumped into one event. This conflation, however, is a common and pervasive popular picture of the Clearances, as T.M. Devine notes in the opening lines of his 1992 essay on the role of landlordism in driving Highland emigration: "In the popular mind, Highland clearances and Highland emigration are inextricably linked. The depopulation of northern Scotland is seen as the direct result of the expropriation of the traditional peasantry and their forced removal from their homeland" (84). Similarly, Eric Richards observes, "In effect, the story of emigration merged into the history of the Clearances precisely because they were both expressions of the melancholy poverty of a region the control of which lay in the hands of a landlord class, incapable financially or intellectually, of finding a solution" (1985 258). In another essay, Richards goes on to note that "there is a danger of reducing it [emigration during the Clearances] to a single and powerful image," an easy combination as "emigration to Canada and Australia certainly contains indelible accounts of dejected emigrants from the Highlands, many arriving in pitiful circumstances which can be related to eviction and associated poverty" (Richards in Harper/Vance 106).[77] However, Richards also takes care to note that the texture of emigration over the course of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was neither consistent nor uniform and instead was largely characterised by small-scale, but pervasive, removals and departures of Highlanders that often went unrecognised by the press and public throughout the decades. While there were certainly large-scale

[77] It is interesting here that Richards opts for the term "image" when describing the common confusion that equates Clearance with emigration. The picture of the departing and dispossessed Highlander that emerges from this conflation, this "single and powerful image," is one that remains highly prevalent within the poetry and painting of the era, as will be discussed below. The dominance of this view in contemporary popular memory seems also to trace its origin to the easily translatable emotional and dramatic content of the parting scene as well as to the lingering bitterness harboured by descendents of Clearance-era emigrants. For another example, see Gerald Laing's Clearances Memorial sculpture in Sutherland and the plans for an interpretive centre for descendants at Helmsdale.

evictions and emigration schemes with wider-reaching social consequences, which ultimately have become symbolic of the process of the Clearances, the more comprehensive interpretation of the era employs a wider view of the smaller-scale emigration events as well as the consequences such population changes wrought within the landscape. In their works, both Devine and Richards note the prevailing trend that strongly links the Clearances with the highly visible emigration component, thereby obscuring the spectrum of other more geographical events and outcomes that occurred during the era, such as the shifting land use patterns, the creation of sheep runs and deer parks, and the growing perception of the landscape as a deserted wilderness, all of which grew out of the economic and demographic currents of the times. As I have argued above, the texture of Clearance history varied greatly across time and geography and extended to many more aspects of Highland life than emigration (nor was all emigration from the Highlands necessarily a product of clearance for sheep or eviction by landlord) but, interestingly, images of Highland emigration during this period, whether painted, written, or sung, remain the most emotive and persistent memories, either historically accurate or fabricated, of the era. These episodes of eviction and emigration were perhaps the most visible outcome of the Clearance era and remained highly amenable to nostalgic romanticisation, making emigration a prime subject for popular interpretations of the Clearances and consequently creating a striking interplay with the academic studies discussed above.

1. The Historical Background

Before embarking upon a detailed discussion of the relevant paintings of Highland emigration during the Clearances, it will be most useful to turn first to historians' interpretations of the era in an effort to outline its basic events as a

background context for the artwork. In examining the emigration trends of the period, historians generally agree that the character of the Highland exodus underwent a marked change from the comparatively prosperous departures of the late-eighteenth century to the more distressed, and increasingly publicised, episodes in the decades following the 1815 economic downturn and ensuing years of poor harvest and impending subsistence crises.[78] Since emigration from the Highlands certainly predated the earliest episodes associated with the Clearances in the second half of the eighteenth century, it is essential to place Highlanders' burgeoning involvement in migration and emigration within a context that accentuates their pre-existing geographical awareness and mobility (Richards 2000 180, Harper 4). The people of the area had already established a critical pattern of seasonal and permanent migration by the 1700s, a trend that demonstrates not only their familiarity with mobile lifestyles but also illustrates the localised needs for greater employment opportunities on a larger geographical scale (Richards 1985 180, Withers 1998 5). Consequently, from the 1750s and '60s until the outbreak of the American War for Independence in the mid-1770s, departures from the Highlands to the Americas grew on a massive scale, with nearly 10,000 Highlanders leaving Scotland for North America, a number that constitutes a disproportionately large segment of all British migration of the period (Devine 1992 87). This volume of emigration waned with the onset of both the American Revolution in 1776 and with the later 1793 outbreak of hostilities with France, but increased once again following the attainment of peace in 1803 (Devine 1992 88, Richards 1985 194-196). The cyclical nature of the emigration in these decades certainly reflects the changing economic and political atmosphere of the years between the wars, but it should also be noted that emigration from the

[78] The best discussions of Highland emigration throughout the Clearances are in Richards, Devine, and Harper, with Bumsted and Hunter offering contrasting viewpoints.

Highlands took place not as a uniform exodus of people, but rather as a patchwork of departing parties and families that varied according to geography and time, sometimes coalescing into periods of massive departures and other times remaining a relatively small trickle. Richards estimates the number of emigrants from the whole of Scotland in this period (1783-1803) as 20,000, with most intending migrants originating from the Highlands, while Devine supplies a slightly lower figure (Richards 1985 195, Devine 1992 89). Despite the numerical discrepancies, which stem from the difficulties in gaining access to limited source materials and data for the era, the figures nevertheless illuminate the extent and magnitude of this first phase of Clearance-era Highland emigration.

The various forces driving these early outbursts of emigration from the Highlands as well as the character and conditions of the people who actually left during this time are consistently debated in the literature and highlight an ongoing area of contention for modern historians. An infrastructure of Highland communities in North America had been in place since the 1730s, easing the way for the new immigrants during the later decades of the century and providing a crucial social and commercial background for the establishment and continuance of chain migration (Withers 1998 32, Devine 1992 89-90, Richards 1985 234). Layered upon this pre-existing framework were the socio-economic currents that continued to shape the texture of Highland life at the time, such as the increasingly straitened conditions on estates, the concomitant landlord interest in improving economic efficiency, and the growing dissatisfaction within classes of tacksmen[79] and tenants, who faced rising

[79]Tacksmen traditionally occupied a mediating position between clan chiefs and tenants as they held and administered the clan land holdings. As the Clearance era progressed into the late-eighteenth century, however, tacksmen were often among the earliest emigrants from former clan lands following their relinquishment of the increasingly difficult role as landed middlemen in the face of landlords' growing insistence upon profitability and on a more direct relationship to tenants. (Hunter 2000 41, 46, Withers 1998 32).

rents and persistent subsistence pressures alongside the changed clan structure that emerged from the aftermath of the '45. Despite these forces that combined to alter Highland ways of landholding and usage, the people who left the area during this period were generally not the victims of sheep clearance, destitution, or outright eviction that they are often popularly perceived to be or that they sometimes became in later episodes. Instead, these early Highland emigrants were largely members of the middle class, who possessed sufficient savings or were able to amass enough funds to underwrite the expense of their own emigration through the sale of cattle, household goods, and other items (Devine 1992 91, Harper 20, Bumsted 13). As Devine writes, "This was not an exodus born of desperation or the stress of hunger and destitution. Rather it was a movement which involved a degree of calculation and a careful weighing of prospects on the part of social groups who were able to exert some choice" (1992 92). While these groups of emigrants undoubtedly responded to the pervasive economic and social changes that surrounded them, it is clear that their decision to depart from the Highlands was also informed by their own dissatisfaction with their current lot in Scotland, by the lure of better opportunities on North American soil, and by their ability to enable this change through their own resources.

In spite of this relatively clear characterisation of early emigration, it is nevertheless dangerous to assume that any set of economic, social, or political factors, whether externally foisted upon the Highland middle class or internally generated, directly instigated episodes of emigration when it is clear from primary sources and secondary analyses that the motivations and pressures of the ensuing departures were highly complex and multicausal. For example, the emigrations of the late-eighteenth century occurred against a background of strong public opposition to the departure of growing numbers of Highlanders. Many landlords feared the loss of labourers from

their estates, in spite of continually rising population levels, as economic opportunities grew in areas such as the kelp and fishing industries (Richards 1985 196, Devine 1992 90-91). Francis Humberston Mackenzie, later Lord Seaforth and landlord of estates in Kintail and Lochalsh in Wester Ross as well as on the Isle of Lewis, expressed similar views regarding emigration in his correspondence with George Dempster, a prominent agricultural improver and supporter of Scottish commerce who also bemoaned the growing trends of emigration away from the Highlands. In a 1790 letter to Mackenzie regarding the condition of the Lewis estate, Dempster tellingly described the landlord and –lady as "not modern but Primitive Kings & Queens Legislators & Benefactors of your People who will thrive under your general influence like melons in a Hot Bed" and mentioned his plans to tour the area "from Stornoway to Loch Roug, hoping to find the whole way lined with human settlements where cattle have hitherto only roamed for a few months in summer."[80] His words clearly express a desire to help Mackenzie expand the commercial activities and settlements of the Lewis inhabitants and illustrate the contemporary mistrust of emigration alongside an appreciation for the landlord's role in promoting the welfare of his tenants. Dempster continues his letter by urging Mackenzie to pay his working tenants "the ordinary wages of the Island...it is but a Mite added to your expense and a mountain added to their prosperity" and proceeds to comment on happenings at other Highland estates:

> I am truly sorry for the emigration of the Egg (sic) People. We may without a Pun call the Island an Empty Shell. The Cannay (sic) people will go I have no doubt. The emigration of the whole inhabitants of an Island the neglect or oppressions they must feel before forming so violent a resolution the measures they concert for executing their Plan

[80] I am grateful to Helen Smailes of the National Gallery of Scotland for providing a transcript of these letters from the Seaforth Muniments at the National Archives of Scotland.

> and at last their final Departure—Man woman child & Household Gods—their sucking infants & aged Parents has something awfull in it and inspires my mind with a kind of sublime and grand Melancholy...As to the Highland Society[81] I alledge they encourage the Bag Pipe to drown the noise & groans of the People, like Drums in a battle. Till its members unite in destroying personal services and short Leases I shall consider them as a little defective in sincerity or understanding.[82]

Dempster's vivid description of the emigration scene, as well as his sympathetic vision of the departing emigrants, clearly demonstrate the prevailing opposition to emigration from Highland estates and illuminate the multifaceted and geographically varied conditions that prompted Highland departures in the decades around the turn of the nineteenth century. The debate over emigration in this period was highly contentious, much as historians' interpretations of it remain today, and the persistent landowners' opposition to the departure of emigrants culminated in the passage of the Passenger Vessels Act in 1803, a bill that significantly raised the cost of passage on an emigrant ship under the pretence of protecting the health and safety of passengers. Despite its thinly veiled intentions, the Passenger Act did not fully staunch the outflow of emigrants from the Highlands as people continued to leave, evidence of the competing motivations and pressures that informed their departures.

From here, historians heatedly debate the degree to which the departing Highlanders were voluntary emigrants or involuntary exiles. Some historians, like Eric Richards, maintain that it is essential to determine the distinction between

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[81] According to Hunter, the Highland Society was "something of a landlords' trades union" and, as a group, held meetings and appointed committees to investigate the underlying causes of emigration around the turn of the nineteenth-century. The members placed the blame on deceitful emigration agents, but also recognised that some landlords' resettlement of tenants played a role in the tide of out-migration (Hunter 2000 59).

[82] Dempster's account of emigration is also notable as it couches the scene in aesthetic terms like "sublime and grand Melancholy" and includes references to the departure of entire families and household belongings against a background of bagpipe music. These conventions reappear in numerous emigration paintings, which will be discussed below. The Sublime is discussed in Chapter VI.

voluntary and involuntary emigrants in order the assess the relative importance of Malthusian population pressures and the influence of landlords, via their role in raising rents and setting new uses for the land, in the movement of people away from the Highlands at this time (1985 189). Devine counters by arguing that the over-reliance on demographic and economic factors weakens understanding of the full spectrum of emigration within the Clearances by allowing the characters involved, particularly landlords, to assume the role of "bit players" whose individual actions and estate policies become strictly an outgrowth of external supply and demand factors, rather than major determinants of the pressures to emigrate (1992 85). On the other hand, Vance writes that "historians are over-fond of distinguishing between voluntary and forced emigration" and goes on to argue that "landlords created the preconditions for migration. Market forces did the rest. Very few of the emigrants during this period were 'voluntary' in the true sense of the word" (Vance/Devine 1992 76). Hunter takes this negative view of landlordism many steps further in his works, as he argues for the placement of blame squarely on the shoulders of the landlords, viewing peasant departures of the Clearance era as a direct consequence of the dominance and exploitation of the landed class. The disparities among these views attest to the complications inherent in the analysis of the amorphous and qualitative motivations, compulsions, and goals of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Highlanders and, taken together as a body of secondary sources, provide a detailed picture of the market forces, social pressures, and personal decisions involved in the departure of emigrants.

A further element of informative disagreement occurs in historians' interpretations of the relative influence and operation of push and pull factors in the exodus from the Highlands during the period under discussion. The often-quoted and

much maligned work of J.M. Bumsted, who writes from the perspective of Canada in looking back to the Highland emigrations, promulgates the view that departures from Scotland, particularly in the years before 1815, were essentially undertaken as rational reactions against the deteriorating social and economic conditions of their homelands (ix-xvi). In Bumsted's view, the departing peasants largely chose to leave Scotland for Canada in search of greater opportunities and the chance to maintain a "traditional" way of life, a view that, while investing the emigrants with a greater degree of agency, ignores many sources and also inaccurately limits the influence of other motivations, such as landlord interference and economic forces. This controversial perspective has received a great deal of criticism for its narrow and patronising view of the full spectrum of both push and pull factors behind emigration, but the value of Bumsted's view of the enticing opportunities available in North America has received attention from many other historians.[83] The pull of readily available freehold land and the associated employment opportunities it offered, as well as the ease of passage advertised by emigration agencies of the era and the pre-existing Highland communities in North America, are factors that inform the views of emigration taken in the works of Marjory Harper and Marianne McLean, among others. Harper recognises that emigration from the Highlands served as both an escape route from hardship and an avenue of advancement and her work consequently portrays a balanced, but ultimately hopeful, view of intending emigrants from Scotland and their goals and successes in their new homes (32). Similarly, McLean investigates the establishment and growth of a Highland community in Canada with the view that the Canadian immigration from Scotland occurred against a backdrop of interacting push and pull factors, which involved a greater degree of choice than is

[83] See particularly Devine 1992 (93) and McLean (4-5).

generally recognised, particularly in the pre-1815 emigrations.

There are more frequent instances of congruence in the historical literature surrounding the later years of Clearance-era emigration, as the forces of demographics, agriculture, and landlord involvement became more visible in the movement of tenants from Scotland to new settlements in North America and Australia. During these years, particularly in the decades following 1815 through to the poor harvests and lingering subsistence crises of the 1840s and '50s, historians tend to agree that the level of landlord involvement in the exodus of emigrants increased as greater numbers of tenants were required or assisted to leave their homes on Highland estates.[84] Although Highlanders had already evinced a notable familiarity with and dependence on temporary migration to southern areas during harvest times as an additional source of income to help defray their rising rental costs, the level of this intra-national movement continued to increase through the 1820s, as reduced economic opportunities in the kelp industry and other fields, such as a collapse in the prices of cattle, required a greater reliance on other avenues of income (Withers 1998 5, 63-66, Devine 1988 146). This trend continued through the 1830s and '40s and consequently reflected the deteriorating agricultural conditions that occurred during periods of poor harvest and potato blight. It was also during these decades that a growing interest in Highland emigration became apparent in both the public arena and the increasingly distressed estates where tenants more frequently requested monetary assistance from their landlords in an effort to afford the cost of emigration (Richards 1985 227). The public likewise became newly concerned with the plight of the Highlanders, particularly during the crop failures of the mid-1830s, and undertook schemes to collect funds for destitute tenants and to raise

[84] The best discussions of this era of emigration are in Devine 1988 and Richards 1985, while Withers 1998 offers a detailed analysis of temporary and permanent urban migration.

consciousness of rural conditions in the Highlands. One such scheme, for example, which was advertised in *The Scotsman* during the spring of 1837, proposed the auction of several paintings to support the Committee on Highland Destitution and to supply the wants of a group of emigrants preparing to depart from the Highlands and Islands for Australia.[85] Even the government undertook a trial exercise in subsidised emigration to Australia around this time, evidence of both increasing public awareness of deteriorating Highland conditions and the growing support for the agreeability of emigration as a solution for the burgeoning financial and demographic woes of estate proprietors (Richards 1985 242).

While the issue of emigration and Highland destitution became increasingly evident in the newspapers and public causes of the early decades of the nineteenth century, the level of landlord involvement and inducement likewise expanded, especially as agricultural and economic downturns continued to beset the region throughout the 1840s and '50s. With the onset of the potato blight in 1846, the visibility of the problem of persistent population growth alongside concurrent constrictions on available food and income resources became more apparent and sparked a debate regarding the degree of responsibility carried by estate proprietors for the well-being and support of their tenants during lean years (Devine 1992 97). As famine conditions and the concomitant rural poverty worsened, support for emigration as a means through which to relieve pressure on available resources grew and, although responses varied greatly from estate to estate, most historians, such as Devine and Richards, detect a growing degree of landlord involvement behind the tide of emigration. Some proprietors, like MacLeod of Dunvegan, went bankrupt in their attempts to preserve their tenants from the ravages of poverty and famine, while

[85] See *The Scotsman*, Wednesday, 31 May 1837, front page.

others, recognising the potential futility of such assistance, chose instead to pursue organised schemes of eviction and emigration (Hunter 2000 102). Such schemes were often deemed necessary to relieve the estates of the financial and social burden of the poorest classes of Highlanders, who could not independently afford passage on emigrant vessels even if they wanted to leave. Richards writes: "The people themselves were often in such fearful poverty that emigration came as a blessed release. But emotional attachment to the homeland and the memory...of better years in the past undoubtedly rendered most departures painful and affecting" (1985 258). In an example of a landlord-activated emigration scheme, Sir James Matheson, the proprietor of Lewis, attempted to deal with the island's intense congestion, poverty, and desperation by first applying funds towards employment opportunities and famine relief but, when these proved untenable, then embarked upon a plan of land reorganisation, eviction, and emigration. Despite the relatively generous terms offered to potential émigrés and the obviously squalid living conditions on the island, many of Matheson's tenants expressed great reluctance to leave Lewis, an unwillingness eventually overcome as more than 2,200 people left the island as a result of the landlord's plans (Richards 2000 245).[86] In Matheson's case and in many others throughout the Highlands, direct landlord involvement served as the method by which tenants were induced to emigrate through the application of varying degrees of coercion and financial assistance, in the shape of relief of rent arrears or direct sponsorship for shipboard passage. Clearly, as Devine writes, "The interaction between crop failure, population pressure, and economic crisis was a necessary but not a sufficient cause of this exodus. Other elements, and in particular, landlord strategy, were also vital" (1992 96).

[86] See also Richards 1985 (253), Devine 1992 (96), and Hunter 2000 (102,127).

As is evident from the preceding sampling of recent scholarship on emigration, the available perspectives vary greatly as historians attempt to assess the relative impact of expulsive and attractive forces within the forum of emigration studies during the course of the Clearances. This group of historical researches provides a wealth of interpretations surrounding the role and operation of emigration during these years. However, it is not the express purpose of this chapter to present a definitive opinion regarding the underlying reasons behind Clearance-era emigration, whether voluntary or involuntary, pushed or pulled, but rather to portray and discuss the varying viewpoints with the intention of more fully illuminating the historical and historiographical contexts for the relevant works of art. From the researches of the aforementioned historians, it is clear that emigration from the Highlands at this time comprised a wide range of motivations, expulsive pressures, and economic conditions, but the paintings of such emigrations tend to portray the more publicised and easily romanticised episodes of destitute and enforced departures from Scotland, much like the related vein of contemporary nostalgic English-language poetry and commentary regarding the departures of so many Highlanders for faraway settlements in North America and Australia. These paintings, which fit neatly within the emerging Victorian interest in the pathos of the parting scene, depict Clearance-era emigration as an event capable of illuminating the nostalgic connections between Highlanders and their native landscape, a characteristic that relies on poetic sources and geographical specificity and that distinguishes paintings of Highland emigration from the larger body of Victorian emigration paintings.

2. The Role of Emigration Poetry

In addition to the current historical literature discussed above, the newly appreciated body of nineteenth-century Gaelic poetry, alongside the contemporary poetic commentary in English and the modern discussions of such sources, continue to provide access to the cultural background surrounding the emigrations of the Clearance era and serve to enlarge the context in which the paintings may be considered. While emigration-related poetry in English commonly offered mainstream melodramatic and nostalgic perspectives on specifically Highland emigration to large audiences, both in Britain and North America, the contrasting strand of work in Gaelic provides a more intimate view of the Clearance proceedings from the standpoint of the Highlanders involved in the departures. Unfortunately for past historians, these Gaelic verses are only now gaining academic recognition as valid and valuable insiders' commentary on the Clearances and the associated episodes of emigration and are particularly beneficial within this study, as indigenous paintings of Clearance and emigration do not exist and the remaining poetry can therefore offer valuable comparisons to the existing paintings created by and for non-Highlanders.[87] The worth of the poems as sources crucial to the attainment of greater insight into Highlanders' views regarding emigration is given further emphasis in the contrast between Gaelic poetry and the English-language output that frequently informed and inspired the painted depictions of emigration during the nineteenth century. These works in English, and many of the paintings that derive inspiration from them and consequently express a view aligned to that of the dramatised scenes of the poems, impart a distinctly external view of emigration and exploit the subject's

[87] These poems also express the environmental and social changes wrought throughout the Highland landscape during the Clearance era, an issue discussed in chapters IV and VI. The oral tradition is a vitally important aspect of Gaelic culture and was the primary vehicle for the preservation of historical memory and the conveyance of opinion regarding contemporary events. See Meek for further discussion.

pathetic capability to evoke sadness and despair. Both types of poetry, however, emphasise the importance of landscape as a primary bearer of nostalgia that held particular resonance for Highland emigrants and that received further prominence in painted depictions of emigration, thereby distinguishing these specifically Highland works from the larger body of Victorian paintings on the theme.

The accessibility of Gaelic poetry as a source for historians has recently undergone a marked expansion, primarily through the research, interpretation, and translation efforts of Celtic scholar Donald E. Meek, and the subsequent increase in poems available in translation has greatly enhanced the relevance of these verses to continuing research in Highland history.[88] In the introduction to his groundbreaking volume of collected poems regarding the evictions, emigration, ecological changes, and later land riots that characterised the Clearance era, Meek recognises that Gaelic poetry has long been an under-appreciated area of historical enquiry, a quality accentuated by the limited availability of suitable English translations and by historians' frequent distrust of the perceived subjectivity of the poems and the consequent dismissal of the works as appropriate background to academic study (10). Hunter lends further credence to the new lines of enquiry opened by Meek's work by noting that, had Gaelic poetry been more readily available during his preparatory research for *The Making of the Crofting Community*, the finished volume certainly would have drawn more extensively from this area of historical evidence (2000 25). Likewise, Richards acknowledges the centrality of poetry as the principal vehicle for the Gaelic community's expression of the anger, despair, and resentment that coloured the indigenous Highland experience throughout the Clearance era, but also expresses a mild concern regarding the extent to which the relevant poems supply

[88] For additional commentary on Clearance poetry, see also Sorley MacLean's essay.

elements of folk memory rather than verifiable, quantitative historical facts and notes that the scarcity of such insiders' commentary often leads to disproportionate emphasis on the available sources. Richards nevertheless asserts that the poetry offers the chief means through which to assess and experience the indigenous reaction to the Clearances (2000 xi, 317-18).

It is precisely this immediate quality of the poetry that distinguishes it as one of the most useful, and perhaps the only, avenue through which to explore the native Gaelic reactions to the pervasive changes wrought in both landscape and population throughout the nineteenth century. Meek stresses that

> the majority of the poets covered in this volume [*Tuath is Tighearna: Tenants and Landlords*] were themselves crofters or cottars...Most were affected by the various processes of social dislocation which afflicted the Highlands...Such people had first-hand experience of the scenes they describe. (10)

The internal perspective thus offered by the composers of poems generates a great contrast to all other manner of nineteenth-century commentary from outside observers, whether as news reportage, travel accounts, melodramatic poetry, or even artistic representations. For example, the unknown composer of the verse "'Venus' nan Gaidheal/'Venus' of the Gaels" vividly described the eviction and emigration of a group of crofters from Islay:[89]

> I am here on a hillock,
> at the foot of a hill, all alone,
> thinking about my friends
> and how I have been left behind;
> my father and mother have gone
> and all my brothers,
> and although my laughter can be heard,
> it breaks through the desire to shed tears.

[89] Meek writes that those departing were most likely the group of émigrés leaving Oa in 1862-63, following clearance by landlord John Ramsay of Kildalton, who also provided assisted passage to Canada (67).

When the 'Venus' departed,
that was a very great number of people;
there were four hundred and two of them
packed into her hull;
if only the breeze had favoured them
by carrying them over unharmed,
and the King of All had conveyed them safely
across the wave-tossed ocean!

But the wind was against them,
and the ocean rose in fury;
when the showers thickened,
their appearance was like a grey crow;
the head sails were torn
and the great masts bent down;
every one of them was in agony—
they had a tale of hardship to tell.

News came to the land
that the full complement had not survived;
that left me sorrowful,
my heart heavy with grief;
they had lost their way
and mist had come down thick upon them,
the slender masts were stripped.,
and the helmsman was injured.

With firm land under [their] feet,
the sadness and weariness departed;
every one who had means
put self-esteem into effect;
they left me alone
on a lovely knoll in the heather;
in a dream I began [to talk],
and my conversation went like the wind.

The dream that I saw in my sleep
was that you were with me, my love;
when I woke in the morning,
that was a vain thought;
although I have been for a while
lying in the heather,
I have a great desire to go over
to the land of the trees. (Meek 66, 198)

This poem, and others reproduced in Meek's compilation, powerfully evoke the scene and process of emigration as well the feelings of anger, sadness, and ultimately hope

that grew from such events.[90] Meek writes of this verse:

> The most significant feature of this splendid poem is its hard-headed realism...The composer, who was closely related to the emigrants, concludes the poem by deciding to follow them. He or she weighs up the various issues, and, having achieved a personal catharsis by facing the hardships of the emigrant voyage, finds new hope in the decision to cross the ocean to 'the land of the trees'. Not all Gaelic poets spent their time bemoaning their fate and condemning the supposed perpetrators of their misery. (21)

The poet's emphasis on geographical characteristics is also illustrative of the landscape perspective apparent in many Gaelic poems as the work employs recognisably distinctive qualities of both Highland and North American landscapes, such as heather and trees, in its description of the feelings and actions of the emigrants.[91] Although "'Venus' nan Gaidheal/'Venus' of the Gaels" deals with a slightly later episode of emigration than those previously discussed in this thesis, its perspective on the event is characteristic of other Gaelic reactions to earlier departures and is contemporaneous with many paintings of emigration. It offers, therefore, an invaluable glimpse into the dual nature of indigenous reaction to Clearance in the Highlands: sadness and anger tempered with optimism.

The ultimate sense of hopefulness at the end of an arduous journey and as the product of great personal labour and self-respect characterises the poet's thoughts in the final stanzas of the preceding poem, an element of the work that emphasises the overall feelings of hope, independence, and reward that pervaded the works of Gaelic poets on both sides of the Atlantic during the nineteenth century. The escape from oppression and the sustaining hope of readily available land as well as the opportunity

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[90] See also, for example, poems eight and eleven in *Tuath is Tighearna.*

[91] In addition to Meek's discussion of this topic, see also James Hunter's 1995 work, *On the Other Side of Sorrow: Nature and People in the Scottish Highlands.*

to work that land independently are common themes in many Gaelic poems, which include works from North America. Richards writes that poets, in voicing the recent history and experiences of their communities, conveyed the idea that "emigration...was perceived as 'a merciful deliverance from a collapsed world order', a liberation from the terror of eviction and the behaviour of oppressive landlords" (2000 318). Furthermore, in her work recounting the songs of Highland emigrants in North America, Canadian historian Margaret MacDonell detects these persistent themes within the poetry, verse, and song of North America. She notes that, while many poets vividly expressed the deep sorrow and anger that grew from the rising rents, frequent disruption of tenure, and emigration alongside their persistent resentment of the landlords and factors responsible for such changes, the majority of the poems nevertheless highlight the new opportunities available in North America with an optimistic view towards the development of these positive circumstances (7-15). Despite the massive upheaval and trauma of the emigrant journey, it is clear through the output of Gaelic-speaking poets of the nineteenth century, who historically served as recorders of community history and as fountains for the expression of public sentiment within these communities, that emigration and resettlement in a new land, though filled with gruelling labour, were nevertheless regarded with a great degree of hope and optimism.

The English-language poetry of this era, on the other hand, conveys a remarkably contrasting view of the emigrants' journeys and their view on resettlement away from the Highlands, evidence of the clear difference between the indigenous experience and the popular view from the outside. Newspapers, such as the *Inverness Advertiser*, *The Witness*, and the *North British Daily Mail*, among others, frequently published verses lamenting the departure of emigrants and the breakdown of

"traditional" Highland society, particularly through the 1850s, nearly contemporary with the previously cited " 'Venus' of the Gaels" (Fenyo 170). These poetical works commonly employed a romanticised perception of both the departed emigrants and their relationship to the land and the resulting depiction of hapless and helpless emigrants forever parted from their homelands appealed greatly to the sensitivities of the reading public and served to elucidate the distinctive qualities of specifically Highland emigration (Fenyo 165-176). The lack of agency and resolve assigned to the emigrants depicted in such poems contrasts sharply with the characterisation of departing Highlanders in poems by Gaelic-speaking poets, most of whom were personally involved with the people and scenes of emigration they describe. In these Gaelic examples, the émigrés express hope and determination to survive both the harsh overseas journey as well as the impending trials involved in the creation of new communities within a foreign landscape, despite the obvious sadness and anger at the events leading up to such departures. The absence of this self-reliance and recognition of opportunity, and the prevalence of romanticised visions of hopeless sadness and resignation, mark the majority of English-language poetry as fundamentally different from the body of Celtic work on the same subject.

English-language songs and poems written from a North American perspective also portray a similar picture of the immigrant Highlanders and their melancholic backwards glances at Scotland. One of the most commonly cited examples of these works is the "Canadian Boat Song," originally published in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1829 and written by an unknown poet who had never been to Canada (Cowan in Harper/Vance 61). The suspected author of the work, David MacBeth Moir, a physician from Musselburgh, relied "on second-hand accounts and on his imagination to concoct his literary description of the Gaelic immigrant's

experience, but this was apparently more than enough for the general public" (Kennedy in Harper/Vance 274). The resulting work deals with an invented immigrant in Canada who wistfully pines for a patchworked recreation of the most romanticised elements of Highland scenery and the verse still enormously popular today as an account of Highland emigration to Canada.[92] This theme recurs in "The Scottish Emigrant's Lament," one work among many others that were often composed by authors who were second- and third- generation Canadians of Scottish ancestry, but who had never seen Scotland (Cowan in Harper/Vance 63).[93] The resulting landscape pastiche and the transatlantic sadness with which the Highlands are regarded is clear in "The Scottish Emigrant's Lament":

> My own native land! thou are dear to my heart,
> The thought of thee fills me with deepest emotion;
> Stern Fortune condemned me from thee to depart,
> To cross the rude waves of the deep-rolling ocean.
>
> Though fair is that landscape that greeteth my eye,
> I pine for the sight of thy dark, rugged mountain;
> No beauteous heather, no gowans are nigh,
> No more can I bask by the clearest of fountains. (Cowan in Harper/Vance 64)

As in the English-language poetry treating emigration from the Highlands, the poets writing from a Canadian perspective, regardless of their actual location and background, employ a similarly artificial construction of landscape images to over-accentuate the romantic aspects of Highland emigration and the nostalgic feelings of the émigrés for their homelands.

In both of the above strands of English-language poetry, whether written from

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[92] Intriguingly, Kennedy also points out that "The Canadian Boat Song" served as the poetic inspiration behind the construction of the Lone Shieling, a monument erected within the Cape Breton Highlands National Park in Nova Scotia (Harper/Vance 274). The Shieling, which was constructed in the 1930s to commemorate the Highland emigrants to Cape Breton Island, is a replica of a Highland dwelling that incongruously sits within a preserved 350-year-old sugar maple forest, the most northerly example of its kind. The building type is one that never appeared within the Canadian settlers' landscape but, despite its oddly inconsistent placement in this context, the structure and the accompanying plaque quoting "The Canadian Boat Song" illustrate the pervasive sentiment conveyed within this popular, though less than authentic, emigration poem.

[93] See also Womack (118-131) for further discussion of emigrant poetry within a Highland context.

the perspective of the departing emigrants or from their new settlements in North America, the element of nostalgia occupies a visible place within the poetic characterisations of the emigrating Highlanders. As Kirsten Daly notes in her article discussing two examples of early nineteenth-century emigration poems, the presence and function of nostalgia in contemporary descriptions of emigration, particularly those departures originating from the Highlands of Scotland, informs numerous popular views of emigration (Daly 25, S. MacLean 64). The two works that form the basis of her article, Anne Grant's "The Highlanders" of 1802 and James Grahame's "The Sabbath" of 1804, are early pieces that treat the causes and consequences of emigration alongside the psychological and social effects of such relocation upon the participating Highlanders. Both poems utilise the notion of nostalgia in its seventeenth-century definition as a palpable physical "illness generated by geographical displacement" from one's homeland and attended by feelings of extreme gloominess, melancholy, and loss of appetite as well as by an impatient and strong desire to return home, a disorder that many physicians and writers conceived as particularly prevalent among Scottish Highlanders (Daly 25).[94] The two works, despite their divergence regarding the efficaciousness of emigration as a solution to the economic crises plaguing the Highlands, rely upon similar conceptions of the perceived persistence of Highlanders' nearly unbreakable bonds with their homelands, a sentiment that frequently colours innumerable popular writings and paintings on the subject of Highland emigration.[95] Grant composed her poem to a departed Highland

[94] Daly traces the literary origins of this sentiment to the writings of Sir Walter Scott, who employed a wistful perspective on the past in his role as historian and "lamenting preserver" of the Scottish (and Highland) past and whose writings were critical sources for many later writers working on Scottish and Highland subjects, particularly those dealing with historical memory and landscape.

[95] For slightly later examples, see the works of the Canadian poet Alexander McLachlan, who composed a lengthy work about Scottish immigrants in Canada, and William Allan's poem "The Last of the Clan", which appeared in the 1876 volume of *The Celtic Magazine*. This work not only relies upon the potency of the phrase "last of the clan" to communicate the plight of emigrating Highlanders, perhaps building on the imagery firmly established by Thomas Faed in his 1865 painting of the same

bard, writing:

> Where are you now? across th'Atlantic's roar
> Do your sad eyes your native hills explore?
> Or homeward do you strain your aching view,
> Where restless waves each other still pursue?...
> Go, hapless bards, and sing in other lands
> Your country's praise to charm her exil'd bands;
> And soothe each drooping mind with thoughts of home,
> While hopeless through the pathless wilds they roam.
> But wherefore exil'd? while afar they rove,
> Still glow their filial breasts with patriot love:
> The thoughts of home still aching at their heart,
> While distance only aggravates the smart. (Daly 29)

Clearly, in Grant's composition, the fictional emigrant retains an enduring connection to the land and landscape of his home, especially as he remains an unwilling exile following his permanent departure from Scotland for North America. The resignation and haplessness of Grant's emigrant bard as well as his longing perspective on the landscape of home mimic the sentiments expressed in many of the later English-language poems discussed above in their portrayals of Highland emigration, which also frequently tend to emphasise these more nostalgic and romantic associations between emigrants and their homelands. Ultimately, however, Grant portrays the unwilling emigration of Highlanders as a positive and necessary development, despite the visceral feelings of sadness and nostalgia that it engenders and, in recognition of this aspect of the work, Peter Womack remarks that "the Highlanders are not simply being written about by a poet—they *are poetical*" (128). For Grant, the essence of Highland identity lies within the culture and clan system, not the landscape, and will consequently survive the transplantation involved in clearance and emigration. Song and poetry remain the optimal means through which to mediate and reconcile the emigrants' feelings of separation from Scotland with

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name, but also vividly employs common landscape themes to evoke the remaining clansman's nostalgia for the landscape and people of home (*Celtic Magazine* 1876 191). Thomas Faed's work, and the lingering influence of its title and emigration imagery, will be discussed later in this chapter.

their new, and likely more nourishing, surroundings in North America (Daly 30-32).

Grahame's Highland emigrant likewise possesses an equally powerful connection to the landscape of his home, but the force of the poet's representation of the inherent link between Highlanders and landscape distinguishes his work from Grant's slightly earlier writings. Grahame employs similar descriptions of the departed Highlander as he looks back on Scotland, but allows the protagonist to return home, a choice that underlines Grahame's vision of the ultimately indissoluble bonds that tie the emigrant to the land of his birth (Daly 35-36). He writes that "the bond between the Highlanders and their native land is so powerful that it cannot, and should not, be broken, on the basis that 'strong mysterious links enchain the heart / To regions where the morn of life was spent'" (Daly 36). Throughout the work, Grahame continues to portray emigration as a type of enforced banishment that is driven by the tragic and harsh socio-economic conditions that alter the population and landscape of the Highlands and the resulting poem consistently critiques these institutions that enable the process of clearance and emigration (Daly 33). He explicitly cites economic strictures and landlord behaviours that have influenced the departures of innumerable Highlanders, recognising that "large districts of the Highlands have been nearly depopulated" on account of the shift in the labour and agricultural markets that have favoured sheep over cattle and other forms of employment (Daly 36). While the aims and perspectives expressed in these two poems are somewhat divergent, the shared portrayal of the links between Highland emigrants and their homelands is both highly persistent and pervasive. The popularly perceived role of the Highland landscape within the emigrant experience is a common theme among Clearance-era emigration poetry as well as a formative factor in the relevant paintings of the era.

Throughout her discussion of the two poems, Daly often refers back to a few lines from an emigration song that continue to appear in early nineteenth-century descriptions of departure scenes in the Highlands and that consequently become a leitmotif within contemporary discussions of emigration events (25). She traces this song back to the writings of Sir Walter Scott in A Legend of Montrose of 1819, in which he cites the song "'*Ha til mi tuidh*' (we return no more), with which the emigrants usually bid farewell to their native shores" (Daly 25). The theme of this song, and its emotive lines expressing the nostalgia and sadness inherent in the departures of emigrants, recur in the work of Anne Grant and other writers of the era who explicitly cite the chorus of the song. Grant employed the phrase in "The Highlanders" (see the poem cited above) to enhance the imagined emigrant's nostalgic attachment to his homeland and, according to Daly, also added an explanatory note to clarify the role of the song as an expression of the sentiment attendant on episodes of emigration:

> There is a plaintive air which the Highlanders always play on the bagpipes at funerals or on other mournful occasions, which when heard out of Scotland, affects a Highlander in much the same way as 'Ranz des Vaches' does a Swiss. The words '*Ha pill, ha pill, ha pill, mi tuillidh*,' signify, 'We return, return, return, no more.' The author has heard it played to two parties of emigrants marching towards the sea. (Daly 30)

Grant's employment of this verse, and her "documentary" description of its use by parties of departing Highlanders, emphasises the currency of both song and verse as pervasive evocations of emigration.

However, while these Gaelic lines certainly possess an overt and useful relationship to the previously discussed strains of nostalgia and regret that colour contemporary English-language poetic discussions of Highland emigration, the song

from which they originate is one that has not survived within the literature, poetry, and paintings as effectively as "Lochaber no More," an English-language poem composed by Allan Ramsay in 1758. In contrast to the previous poem, Ramsay's work has become widely emblematic of the nostalgic plight of emigrants as they depart from their homelands and has continued to serve this descriptive purpose within many media contexts from the nineteenth century through the present day.[96] Alexander Smith noted this popularity in his travelogue of 1851 by writing that "the Highlander has his Lochaber-no-more," a connection that he believed helped to create a poetic aura for Highland emigrants (468). Although initially written as a soldier's lament for his homeland, the application of Ramsay's work has evolved into a much larger sphere, which focuses primarily on emigration, departure, and the backwards glance to a specific point of origin:

> Farewell to Lochaber, and farewell, my Jean,
> Where heartsome with thee I've mony Day been;
> For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more.
> We'll may be return to Lochaber no more.
> These Tears that I shed, they are a' for my Dear,
> And no for the Dangers attending on Weir,
> Tho' bore on rough Seas to a far bloody Shore,
> May be to return to Lochaber no more.
>
> Tho' Hurrycanes rise, and rise ev'ry Wind,
> They'll ne'er make a Tempest like that in my Mind:
> Tho' loudest of Thunder on louder Waves roar,
> That's nathing like leaving my Love on the Shore.
> To leave thee behind me, my Heart is sair pain'd.
> By Ease that's inglorious no Fame can be gain'd;
> And Beauty and Love's the Reward of the Brave,
> And I must deserve it before I can crave.
>
> Then Glory, my Jeany, maun plead my Excuse;
> Since Honour commands me, how can I refuse?
> Without it I ne'er can have Merit for thee,
> And without thy Favour I'd better not be.
> I gae then, my Lass, to win Honour and Fame;

[96] For example, the recurring title phrase of the poem appears in the lyric of The Proclaimers' 1987 hit, "Letter from America," which likewise describes current day departures from Scotland.

> And if I should luck to come gloriously hame,
> I'll bring a Heart to thee with Love running o'er,
> And then I'll leave thee and Lochaber no more. (Kinghorn 281-282)

In the song, Ramsay ostensibly describes the dilemma of a soldier as he prepares to leave behind both his home and his love in Lochaber while sailing off to a war on distant shores. His return is left somewhat doubtful, but Ramsay's characterisation of the soldier's unease and sadness in departing is clear throughout the work. It is furthermore crucial to note that, in the verses, the image of homeland and lover become inextricably linked, as both exist simultaneously and within one specific geographical location. For the soldier, to return to Lochaber is equivalent to returning to loved ones and to home and it is this element of the work is perhaps its most enduring and pervasive quality, one that enables the adaptation of the work to a variety of emigration-related purposes. In these cases, "Lochaber no More" signifies far more than simply a soldier's sadness upon leaving home, but rather becomes a more expansive lament for the forsaken homelands and family that necessarily informs the emigrant experience as well as for the overarching recognition of the potential (and probable) permanence of such a departure. This wide-ranging relevance of the work held particular appeal to both indigenous and external observers and participants (whether willing or otherwise) of Clearance-era emigration events and consequently constitutes a highly visible source of inspiration for writers and painters of nineteenth-century Highland emigration. Its essential significance as a literary meeting point for the expression of emigrants' deep sadness and nostalgia plus the geographical connectedness and specificity that pervade mainstream descriptions of the Clearances and emigration enhance the applicability of "Lochaber no More" to many readings and depictions of emigration during the Clearances. Ramsay's work consistently informs artists' interpretations of the era and serves to illustrate the ways in which these artists

employed the popular and distinctive connections between Highlanders and their homelands and landscape in the relevant paintings of the era.

3. The Paintings

These paintings of emigration, which include, as will be discussed later in the chapter, such readily available images as Thomas Faed's The Last of the Clan (1865) and John Watson Nicol's Lochaber no More (1883), occupy a substantial and largely undervalued place within the remaining visual culture and history of the Clearances. As paintings of emigration in the context of the Highland Clearances, these works include a far wider variety of subjects and painters than is often assumed by many art historians and historians, who tend always to employ the same, well-worn paintings of Clearance-era emigration as illustrations for historical studies of the era, thereby perpetuating the regular connection of those images to the subject. Art historians likewise recognise these more visible Highland emigration paintings as illustrative of the departures that shaped the nineteenth-century social and geographical landscape and acknowledge the fact that these works form a subset of the larger sphere of Victorian paintings on emigration subjects, but few, if any, have fully investigated the specifically Highland works on their own merit as examples of Victorian paintings or, perhaps more problematically, within the historical context of the Clearances.[97] In consequence of this dearth of research and interpretation, I have collected a wider and more inclusive group of emigration images and have examined these works through the lenses of Victorian painting and poetry and the course of the Highland Clearances, an angle and area of research that heretofore has been sidelined and untried.

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[97] See, for example, Wood's careless dismissal of the subject following his acknowledgement of this category of Victorian emigration art: "So much ink has already flowed on the heated topic of the 'Highland Clearances' that I have no desire to add fuel to the flames" (1976 224). He follows this statement with very brief descriptions of a few images of Highland emigration, including those by Thomas Faed and John Watson Nicol.

Alongside that goal, however, it is also valuable to note that the course of the Clearances exerted a continuously formative impact on other aspects of Highland life and landscape and that landscapes and other works depicting Highland life and labour, as illustrated in the previous chapter, also bear the imprint of the after-effects of decades of unstable land tenure and agricultural changes that accompanied the evictions and emigrations most commonly associated with the Clearances. As a group, the paintings amassed for this thesis and chapter exhibit strong iconographical links to the larger body of nineteenth-century emigration subjects, but also possess elements that evince a highly specific connection to the texture and imagery, both written and painted, of Highland emigration during the Clearance era. Such distinguishing characteristics, including the reliance on poetic sources for reference and the use of geography and landscape as symbols laden with Highland specificity and nostalgia, enhance the identification of the works as a discrete category of Victorian subject matter and as informative commentaries regarding the portrayal and perception of emigration from the Highlands during and as a result of the Clearances.

As discussed above, the song "Lochaber No More" afforded nineteenth-century artists with substantial fodder for the depiction of departing Highlanders throughout the Victorian era, despite the intervening decades that separated the actual emigration events from the painted representations. Such paintings and many others that drew from the generous body of melodramatic sources and news coverage began to appear with greater frequency in the late 1840s, lagging behind the harshest and most visible episodes of emigration in the earlier decades of the 1800s. Unfortunately, the current locations of many of these earliest works are unknown and, as they were infrequently reproduced in the arts publications of the times, the only available means of investigation is through titles and the limited descriptions provided

by exhibition reviews in magazines like the *Art-Journal*. The remaining titles, however, do provide comparatively vivid evocations of the paintings' subjects and include the earliest references in 1848 to Leaving Home: A Scene in the Highlands by Sir William Allan (1782-1850) and The Highlander's Departure by Gustav E. Sintzenich (fl. 1844-1866), which were exhibited at the 1848 annual exhibitions of the Royal Scottish Academy and the Royal Academy, respectively. In subsequent years throughout the 1850s, the appearance of Thomas Faed's First Letter from the Emigrants (1849) and Fanny McIan's Highland Emigration (1852), among others, demonstrates the continuing currency and accessibility of Highland emigration subjects at the Royal Academies and within the British art community.[98] These paintings and the examples that followed throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century comprise a body of work that communicates the popular and external view of the emigration from the Highlands, making them valuable statements regarding the establishment and evolution of this melodramatic view of the Clearances. At the same time, the paintings fit neatly within the realm of Victorian emigration subjects, and the associated literary and poetic sources of the era, while simultaneously maintaining a distinct identification with the specific problem of Highland Clearance and emigration through the consistent portrayal and use of the Highland landscape as the source of the nostalgia and melodrama that pervade the works, thus marking them as products of the prevailing perspective on Highlanders and their homelands that persisted throughout the nineteenth century.

a. The Theme of Emigration in Victorian Art

When examined in the broadest perspective, the theme of emigration, along with the social, political, and economic issues tied to the process, maintained a highly

[98] For more general discussions of the theme of emigration within Victorian painting throughout Britain, see Casteras, Rodee, and Nunn.

emotive and popular place within the general scheme of nineteenth-century artistic conventions and iconography. As the pace of emigrant departures quickened throughout the opening decades of the 1800s, and as major crises like the onset of the potato blight in the 1840s continued to shape the futures of innumerable agricultural inhabitants of the British Isles, the topic of emigration remained a visibly contentious area within the scope of contemporary news sources as well as in the artistic and literary output of the times (Nunn 1). Poetic works, like those discussed above, along with public lectures, editorials, and other printed materials served to illuminate the divergent stances maintained by proponents and opponents of emigration, highlighting areas of disagreement concerning the role of emigration as a solution to Britain's social and economic woes in both urban and rural areas. Some observers perceived massive departures as the most effective method to ensure future prosperity for both the émigrés and the remaining residents, while others emphasised the emotional and genealogical ties binding potential emigrants to their rightful homelands and strove to devise the means to retain this endangered, but nevertheless economically and defensively important, sector of the population (Casteras 2-5). This preponderance of emigration-related literature, which mimicked the swell of departures through the 1830s and 40s and into the later decades of the century, also included guidebooks, maps, newspaper supplements, and fictionalised accounts, many of which were illustrated or otherwise full of descriptive details about all aspects of emigrant departures, journeys, and arrivals, for intending emigrants of all social classes (Bell 90-93, Bentley 35-40, Casteras 5). From one of the earliest published "encouragement" tracts of 1625, Sir Robert Gordon of Lochinvar's *Encouragement for Such as Shall Have Intention to Bee Under-takers in the New Plantation of Cape Briton*, to later descriptive works by travelling Scots like John Howison (1821) and

William Fraser (1867) and even Gaelic-language guides, such as Robert MacDougall's *Ceann-iùil an fhir-imrich do dh'America mu-thuath; or, The Emigrant's Guide to North America* (1841), the body of emigrant guides offered a remarkably wide-ranging selection of literature regarding the options, circumstances, and expectations of emigration (K. Halliwell 12-14).[99] As a consequence, the subject of emigration and the associated visual details surrounding the process became securely embedded into the written and visual culture of the mid-nineteenth century.

The range of reactions and viewpoints expressed in the literature, and the amenability of the subject of emigration to the evocation of pathos, contributed to the popularity of emigration as a suitable topic for works of art, which likewise portrayed a wide range of perspectives regarding its function within Victorian society and art markets. Following the trend set by the undulating waves of departures from the beginning of the nineteenth century and by the accompanying body of emigrant literature, the group of paintings on the subject grew more plentiful during the 1840s, peaking in the 1850s, when emigration fever reached its zenith (Casteras 5). The development thus established then continued along a less expansive and generally more conventional path through the 1880s (Casteras 1). However, it is the works of the mid-century that form the basis for the discussion of the theme of emigration within Victorian art, as the subject occupied a central position in the public culture of words and paintings and was consequently "perhaps the most vivid theme that painters of modern life could tackle" (Nunn 9). Emigration offered a prime avenue through which painters could express the shades of opinion regarding the role of emigration as panacea or curse and incite within viewers the full spectrum of appropriate emotions, from sympathy and hopefulness to sadness and despair

[99] Kevin Halliwell offers a brief, though useful, account of the extensive range of emigrant guides included in the collections of the National Library of Scotland.

(Casteras 5, Payne 26-27).

When discussed as a group, Victorian paintings treating the theme of emigration generally fall into four subcategories that depict different aspects of the emigration process, namely: scenes of departure; interiors treating the reading and writing of letters between emigrants and family remaining in the land of origin; images of the newly-arrived immigrants from the perspective of colonies in North America, Australia, and New Zealand; and descriptions of emigrant ships and shipboard conditions. Due to the increasing popularity of emigration subjects within the art world, these conventions provided recognisable frameworks for the illustration of emigrant hardship and occasionally also served as a forum for the expression of a social or political opinion regarding the role of overseas migration. As Susan P. Casteras and Pamela Gerrish Nunn agree, the scene of the emigrants' departure became the most well-established and easily recognised formula among paintings of emigration (Casteras 6, Nunn 10). The depiction of the parting day

> presents the viewer with a figure or figures in the most obvious act of emigration: sailing or steaming away. In this schema, the given figure is meant to embody the feelings that the artist could expect the audience to have experienced or imagined: regret, fear, nostalgia, loss, sorrow on the one hand, and hope, excitement, relief on the other. So readily would the 1860 audience have entered into this subject—by then familiar, it could be surmised, beyond any other except the royal family—that the artist could rely on any of these emotions being read into the image with satisfaction by the viewer. (Nunn 10)

The departure paintings of many artists, including Richard Redgrave and others like Thomas Faed, Henry O'Neil, and P.F. Poole, constitute this spectrum of parting scenes, as they evoke the range of emotions, from hope to despair, in a way that exploits the inherent sentiment of the process, already a popular draw for Victorian

audiences.[100] These scenes, including Richard Redgrave's 1858 work The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home and Thomas Falcon Marshall's Emigration—The Parting Day (1852, plate 35), commonly include travelling accoutrements, such as packed bags and trunks, as well as the household paraphernalia that the emigrants intend to take into their new homes, elements that portray both the material wealth (or lack thereof) of the émigrés as well as the sentimental attachment to belongings that will remain with them along their journey and serve as reminders of home. As in Marshall's picture, the collected possessions generally appear alongside the travellers as they take leave of their homelands and their remaining friends and family members, all of whom echo the departing crowd in their varying expressions of sadness, excitement, resignation, hope, and optimism. There is commonly a great variety of age ranges included in the assembled crowds of both emigrants and onlookers, with the very young and very old represented, perhaps hinting at the emigrants' hopes for future generations who may be provided a more profitable lifestyle than the one that has tried and tired the oldest members of the group. Often, as Marshall's painting again demonstrates, small family groups, generally consisting of determined husbands, trusting wives, and young children, appear alongside single travellers of varying professions to illustrate the spectrum of emigrants and the resonance of the emigrant experience to members of many social strata. Animals are frequently afforded a place in the parting scene as well, with dogs most often filling the dutiful role as a loyal follower into the emigrant journey, and their placement in scenes of specifically Highland emigration, which will be discussed below, strongly recalls the contextual detailing employed by Wilkie in his genre scenes. As a whole, the group involved in

[100] Both Casteras and Bentley cite Oliver Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village" as an early primary source of inspiration underlying these departure scenes. Wilkie also drew from Goldsmith's work in his paintings of rent collection. Goldsmith's use of landscape imagery to express the changes wrought in the rural community through emigration offers a complementary comparison to the Clearance poetry discussed above. See Casteras (6-7), Bentley (37-39), and Womack (119).

the going-away scene is frequently depicted congregating at the scene of ultimate departure on the dockside, as in Thomas Faed's The Last of the Clan (1865), where reminders of the impending shipboard journey are found in the nautical items that punctuate the background, but other paintings of departure, like The Emigrants (1864) by Erskine Nicol, employ the home or the railroad station as the setting, illustrating the number of options available to emigrants as well as the universality of the emotion of the parting day. The setting for this scene frequently also includes meteorological elements, such as a bright sky over the western horizon as in The Hope Beyond (1853) by Jacob Thompson, or other optimistic references to emphasise the perspective of emigration as an ultimately hopeful and profitable endeavour when pursued actively and assiduously by the worthy emigrants, who, like the couple depicted in John Watson Nicol's Lochaber no More (1883), display signs of diligence and humble success in their neat personal appearance and clothing. The artists' frequent reliance on references to the depicted emigrants' middle class status illustrates the greater acceptability and palatability of cleaned-up examples of worthy emigrants rather than the destitute or poor, evidence again of the artists' efforts to allow the nostalgia and emotion inherent in the departure scene to reach the Victorian viewing public.

A second formula common to the popular emigration paintings of the mid-nineteenth century involved the depiction of interior scenes, as families come together to read epistolary news from recently resettled emigrants. These letter-reading paintings, like A Letter from the Colonies (1852, plate 36) by Thomas Webster (1800-1886), illustrate an additional aspect of the emigration process, as they tend to deal with the drama underlying the remaining family's uncertain resolve to emigrate and follow their relatives to new settlements in Australia or North America. Such a

weighty decision imbues these images with a new quality of emotion that does not appear in the departure paintings and that highlights the pull of emigration that operates beyond the parting scenes and that continues to inform the lives of remaining family members. The images of letter-reading, including two other works by James Collinson, The Emigration Scheme (1852, plate 37) and Answering the Emigrant's Letter (1850, plate 38), as well as a number of paintings by Thomas Faed, among others, take place within the domestic interiors of families of potential emigrants and consequently provide illustrations of the household possessions and general economic position of the subjects. In most cases, as is evident in Collinson's works, it is clear that these emigrants are neither destitute nor even particularly poor, and are actually quite comfortable, if picturesquely shabby, and consequently well able to undertake the journey to a new settlement with a large degree of comfort and choice. Such a depiction of relative fiscal security allows both artist and viewer to skirt notions of necessary emigration for the poorest members of the country and to promote instead the more subtle emotions involved in the weighing of options and the expectation of future happiness and greater profitability in new lands and alongside close family members.

Another convention of these letter scenes that marks their iconographical and historical inheritance surrounds the paintings' implicit recognition of the literacy of the emigrant class. This aspect illuminates an intriguing element of Victorian emigration history in its relationship to the actual reading materials procured by emigrants and to the popularity of the letter format as a means to distribute practical (and often highly unrealistic) information about emigration to potential émigrés. With the proliferation of printed materials that accompanied the growing tides of emigration, the efficacy of distributing encouraging details within the format of letters

became widely apparent and, as a result, was frequently employed by private and governmental agencies to publicise and encourage emigration (Bell 90). These commonly propagandistic accounts of emigrant experiences appeared in newspapers and other popular publications and offered readers well-mediated descriptions of emigrant life and prosperity, always with the exhortation for readers to experience similar success themselves (Bell 90-91). As the disparity between these fictionalised letters and the realities of the often-harrowing emigrant experience became widely known, readers cultivated distrust for the artificial "letter home" and instead relied on the greater honesty and accuracy contained in actual epistles sent from emigrant settlements back to relatives in Britain (Bell 93). The arrival of these personal letters often occasioned special family and community events and the receipt of a reply from home led to similar happenings in emigrant communities, as both missives represented a tangible link across a great geographical divide (Bell 93). Such immediacy and the efficacy of the personal letter in providing accurate details about the new emigrant's experience informs paintings of the letter-reading scenes and illustrates an additional component of the iconography of Victorian emigration paintings.

Following the activities of departure and letter-writing, the subsequent realm of paintings of the emigrant experience involves the depiction of the emigrants in their new settlements along with a nostalgic perspective about the families and homes that were necessarily left behind in the process. These works, which include examples like Thomas Faed's Sunday in the Backwoods of Canada (1859), Elizabeth Walker's The Emigrants (c. 1845), and An Emigrant's Thoughts of Home (1859, plate 39) by Marshall Claxton, portray not only the hard work performed by emigrants to make their new homes more habitable and profitable, but also express the nostalgia

often associated with emigration as artists compare the settlement of new environments to the qualities of the lands left behind. In the above works, the Scottish examples of which will be discussed below, artists frequently include visual references to the emigrants' homelands, in the form of portraits, clothing, or even references to songs and poems, that highlight the geographical and cultural distance between old and new homes and that evoke a nostalgic wistfulness in the comparison. Other examples that fit within this category include paintings like Oh Why Left I My Hame?, an 1886 work by Thomas Faed, and Horatio McCulloch's My Heart's in the Highlands (1860) which both employ landscape imagery to emphasise the emigrant perspective on the distant homeland and which will be discussed below. This iconographical formula becomes particularly apparent in Scottish paintings of the Clearance era as painters employed conventional Highland landscape elements to evoke the popularly perceived connection between Highlanders and their home and to accentuate the severance of these ties throughout the emigration process.

Finally, the transoceanic journey from homelands to new settlements constitutes the fourth aspect of the emigrant experience that maintained a highly visible place within nineteenth-century paintings. While shipboard scenes may be viewed as an extension of departure scenes in their frequent portrayal of both emigrants and onlookers, this category of emigration paintings also fulfils the distinct purpose of the depiction of the physical removal inherent in the process and the living conditions aboard ship. For examples, shipboard paintings including Ford Madox Brown's The Last of England of 1852-55, Edwin Hayes' An Emigrant Ship, Dublin Bay, Sunset, 1853 (plate 40), and John Watson Nicol's Lochaber no More, among many others, portray a great variety of perspectives on the marine journey so central to the emigrant experience. From the intimate and highly detailed account of

psychological and physical separation in Brown's work to the wider view of the emigrant ship in Hayes' painting to the backwards glance and collected belongings shown in Nicol's example, the works provide a broad view of both the ideological and quotidian aspects of an emigrant's life aboard ship. Most of these images, however, portray a highly sanitised version of seafaring life that was as equally distant from the reports and accounts of the realities of emigrant quarters aboard such vessels as from the difficulties encountered upon arrival, which received rare and unusually graphic coverage in Hubert von Herkomer's later Pressing to the West: A Scene in Castle Gardens, New York (1884, plate 41). In comparison to Herkomer's gritty portrayal of the cramped and teeming conditions that emigrants often encountered at their destinations, the majority of shipboard paintings are airy and orderly and seemingly full of comfort, qualities that perhaps, as asserted by Casteras, heightened their appeal to the Victorian viewing public who could more easily appreciate the sentiment of departure without the intruding dirtiness of the cramped and often appalling conditions (12-13). To convey these qualities, the works commonly include the nauticalia of the shipscape, with its masts, sails, and lines, the physical means of sustenance for the long journey, such as the food and cabbages depicted in The Last of England, and, on occasion, the receding landscape of the point of departure, often a cause of distress and sadness in the subjects, particularly in Scottish examples. On the whole, shipboard images illustrate the geographical separation of the emigrant experience and emphasise the time and fortitude required to make the journey from the port of origin to the ultimate destination.

As mentioned above, the painting that continues to occupy the role as the most recognised image of Victorian-era emigration and that consequently serves as the most common foil against which to compare other emigration paintings is The Last of

England (1852-55, plate 42), by Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893). The identification of this work as a primary image of Victorian emigration receives further enhancement through Brown's detailed descriptions and explanations of the piece as a scene of departure in both his diary and the catalogue that accompanied the work upon its initial exhibition in 1865.[101] In the painting, Brown combined the shipboard image with a type of departure scene and included many elements that are highly typical of emigration imagery, traits that cement its identification as an archetypal image of English emigration in the mid-nineteenth century. The painting centres on the young emigrant couple, and the tiny baby hidden within the mother's cloak, whose intertwined clothing and postures closely links them together within the minutely described details and activities that fill the canvas. Their shared position, as well as the wife's implicitly expressed trust in her husband's determined fortitude, forms the focus of the scene, while the collected shipboard particulars surround them. In the background, a motley group of various emigrant "types" constitutes the majority of the ship's passengers and includes a working cabin boy, a pair of drunken men, and other women and small children. Hints of their shipboard location surround the crowd, in the various ropes, railings, and lines, as well as in the lifeboat, aptly named "Eldorado" in recognition of the emigrants' high hopes for their new homes. Brown suggested the long sea journey that confronts the passengers through his inclusion of the cabbages suspended from the foreground netting as well as in the supply of produce stored in the lifeboat.[102] Most of the ship's passengers turn to take a final glimpse of England, but the central couple resolutely face forward, in the hopeful and

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[101] See Bendiner, Hueffer, and Surtees for discussions of Brown's work and his writings in diaries and exhibition catalogues.

[102] Although Brown notes the symbolism of the cabbages in the Exhibition Catalogue accompanying the painting, Bendiner questions the purpose of these vegetable elements and considers them products of Brown's humour. Their role in the painting nevertheless enhances the portrayal of the crowded and lengthy, if well-supplied, journey that awaits the emigrants (Bendiner 26, 35, 136).

determined direction of their ultimate destination. As an image, then, The Last of England incorporates many of the common and easily recognised conventions and iconographical elements that shaped Victorian paintings of emigration and the painting, consequently, merits its reputation as a highly indicative example of emigration art.

Furthermore, Brown's work remains both typical and instructive in its portrayal of the emigrants and their material conditions, which shows that these travellers are representative neither of the wealthiest classes nor of the poorest and most destitute groups. Brown certainly intended to portray the emigrants in this light, a decision he fully explained in the catalogue that accompanied the work at its 1865 exhibition:

> This picture is in the strictest sense historical. It treats of the great emigration movement which attained its culminating point in 1852. The educated are bound to their country by quite other ties than the illiterate man, whose chief consideration is food and physical comfort. I have, therefore, *in order to present the parting scene in its fullest tragic development*, singled out a couple from the middle classes, high enough, through education and refinement, to appreciate all they are now giving up, and yet depressed enough in means, to have to put up with the discomforts and humiliations incident to a vessel 'all one class.' The husband broods bitterly over blighted hopes and severance from all he has been striving for. The young wife's grief is of a less cantankerous sort, probably confined to the sorrow of parting with a few friends of early years. (Bendiner 136, Bentley 36, Hueffer 100; emphasis mine)

Brown's desire to portray the emigrants in a way that accentuated their humble gentility and fortitude along with their literate and cultured background illustrates his attempt to create for viewers a more accessible entry into the pathos of the parting

day.[103] In this way, and like many other contemporary painters of emigration scenes, Brown drew upon the sadness and uncertainty surrounding the departure of his friend and colleague Thomas Woolner, who left England for an Australian tour in 1852, to create a scene illustrative of the worries, danger, and permanence of the emigrant journey that then occupied a highly visible place in the public eye (Bentley 35).[104] The Last of England is notably typical of paintings of English emigrants as it combines recognisable iconographic conventions, such as the parting scenes and the shipboard details, within a sanitised framework in order to convey more fully the weightiness, concern, and sadness that pervaded the emigrant experience as it was described in other paintings, poems, and news sources.

As Casteras concludes, examples from this group of English emigration paintings are "amalgam[s] of truth, fiction, and human emotions which Victorian artists could readily utilize and embellish" to create "icon[s] of fortitude which ennobled the struggles and sacrifices of the thousands of real Britons who endured the tribulations of this drastic social remedy" (14). The significance of the paintings as "ennoblers" of the emigrant situation and the works' concomitant ability to communicate the drama of emigration to viewers underlines their currency within the visual culture of the mid-nineteenth century. However, since Casteras specifically cites English emigration, her words create a striking contrast when applied to the group of Scottish emigrant paintings, previously little examined on the strength of their own merit as paintings or within the special context of Scottish, and particularly Highland,

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[103] From Brown's own words and his decisions within the painting, it seems clear that he intended the work to illustrate the trials that face ordinary emigrants, not, as argued by Newman and Watkinson, "to implicate the viewer in condemning poverty and injustice" (89). Nor does it seem probable that the visibly comfortable, though modest, couple are departing under pain of "enforced exile" (Newman/Watkinson 3). Their material belongings, provisions, and the name of the ship, "Eldorado", attest to the rational, albeit trying, decision to emigrate and the hopes harboured by the emigrants of their future homes.

[104] See Verrocchio for a more detailed discussion of Woolner's sojourn in Australia.

emigration and its development during and after the era of the Clearances. These works, much like their English counterparts, employ similar conventions and formulae for the depiction of the emigrant experience, but, though the portrayal of the emigrants still relies upon a more sanitised version of actuality, the depictions of Highland emigrants at this time nevertheless employ a greater degree of economic reality and landscape linkages. Paintings of Scottish emigration, as discussed in the introduction to this section, are likewise more attuned to the poetic connections between Highlanders and their homelands and consequently evince great nostalgia in their depiction of emigration and parting scenes, elements of the paintings that become especially poignant in light of the past and ongoing Clearances that informed their production.

b. The Parting Scene in the Highlands

One of the earliest Highland emigration paintings of which a reproduction is available, despite its currently unknown location, is The Hope Beyond (plate 43), an 1853 work by Jacob Thompson (1806-1879) that was engraved for the 1879 edition of the *Art-Journal.* The engraving served as an illustration to an article describing the new literary work of Jacob Thompson, Junior, who had recently published a story linking together a number of his father's paintings. The novel, entitled *Eldmuir,* presented a story describing the everyday life of rural residents in Scotland, especially the Highlands, and encompassed a number of paintings, both landscapes and genre scenes, which had been carefully engraved under the artist's supervision. Two of these engravings were likewise reproduced alongside the text of the review in the *Art-Journal* and the reviewers praised both literary and artistic efforts, referring to The Hope Beyond as the "grandest work of all" and as "one of the best-conceived, well-studied, forcibly grouped, and exquisitely painted pictures yet exhibited" (1879 270-

271). The reviewers failed to mention, however, the subject of the work, which clearly depicts one of the more evocative scenes of everyday life in the Highlands. The image centres on a group of intending Highland emigrants gathered on a hillock overlooking the shore, where small groups of figures walk toward the awaiting rowboats on the beach and eventually make their way to the larger emigrant ship moored in the harbour. The central cluster of figures includes an aged man ostensibly blessing the younger members of his family, including a kneeling father with his two children as well as his wife and the older matriarch of the family. To the left and right of this vignette are other gatherings of people, some packing their household belongings and others examining a map of the world, perhaps contemplating their ultimate destination. A small group of cottages sits nestled into the background shoreline and the billows of smoke emerging from the chimneys attest to their continuing habitation following the emigrants' departure. Arrayed over the whole scene is a tempestuous cloudy sky that gives way to bright sunbeams, which illuminate both emigrant ship and horizon and indicate the hopeful future of the emigrants.

In many ways, this ultimately optimistic view of Highland emigration mirrors the sentiments of the Gaelic poets discussed above, who recognise both the difficulty of emigration as well as the sense of optimism regarding the future. However, the painting nevertheless employs the subject matter to evoke a melodramatic view and utilises common visual conventions, such as the bekilted and ennobled patriarchal figure, the weeping women, and the loyal dogs and hardworking Highland pony, to further this aim and to extend the details of the scene.[105] The combination of these

[105] Intriguingly, the archives of the Royal Scottish Academy includes an engraving after an unknown painting by Sir George Harvey (1806-1876) that similarly depicts a procession of despairing Highlanders making their way to the shore in a stormy Highland landscape. The scene is heavily redolent of typical Highland emigration scenes in its portrayal of a wide variety of characters of

two strands of melodramatic sorrow and ultimate hope in this early work presages their continuing appearance in Highland emigration paintings throughout the nineteenth century. Thompson's perspective on and use of landscape also inform this early depiction of Highland emigration and foreshadow the continuance of this tendency within later works treating the same subject. The inclusion of typical Highland dwellings as well as characteristic representations of the breezy coastline and undulating land definitively place the scene within north-western Scotland and, according to the reviewer, the readers of *Eldmuir* are able, through the engravings, to breathe pure mountain air, "literally drinking in the full rich mellowness of atmospheric effects, revelling in the glow of colour, and entering heartily into all the minutiae of heath and lake, mountain and home" (1879 271). Here, as can be seen in many other works portraying emigrant Highlanders, Thompson employs landscape associations to convey the sense of mournful permanence and melodramatic nostalgia that imbues such scenes that form part of the visual culture depicting the Clearances and associated events.

Other examples within this vein of Clearance-era parting scenes include paintings by Fanny McIan (1814-1897), Margaret Gillies (1805-1887), and Henry O'Neil (1817-1880), works that, like The Hope Beyond, portray the departures of Highland emigrants with a similar attention to nostalgia and landscape. Although the works of McIan and Gillies are currently unavailable for consultation due to their unknown locations, the titles of these artists' works, Highland Emigration (1852) and The Highland Emigrant's Last Look at Loch Lomond (1859), respectively, convey not only the specific identification of the paintings as scenes of Highland emigration,

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differing ages and types, all proceeding towards the coast to the accompaniment of the bagpipes. Harvey's inclusion of heather, tartan, sheep, standing stones, and the obligatory loyal dogs all evoke the emigration scenes of artists like Thompson. The RSA's engraving may be more likely taken after a work by Harvey entitled Highland Funeral; however, the imagery of processional sadness within the landscape remains vividly similar to paintings of emigration.

but also, more particularly in the case of Gillies' work, hint at the ongoing association of the sadness of the parting day with the emigrants' departure from instantly recognisable landscape locales. Furthermore, the reviews compiled upon the paintings' exhibition at major institutions also provide valuable information regarding the works' subject, style, and composition. W.M. Rossetti recognised McIan's Highland Emigration as one of only three pictures he deemed "reasonably worth looking at" in the 1852 show at the National Institution, while the *Art-Journal* of 1857, the year in which the work appeared at the inaugural exhibition of the Society of Female Artists, also wrote that the painting "claims first notice" (*Spectator* 1 May 1852 422, *Art-Journal* 1857 215).[106] The *Art-Journal* reviewer goes on to describe McIan's efforts more fully, writing:

> It is a large composition, full of figures, many of whom are in the act of embarking in a boat, while others are assisting or bidding adieu to the emigrants; a piper is playing the 'farewell.' The scene is most pathetically expressed, yet without any exaggeration of sentimental feeling; the figures are well drawn, and skilfully grouped; the general colour of the work is low in tone; and although this in some degree detracts from its interest as a mere painting, it is a judicious treatment of the subjects well harmonising with its character. If we recollect rightly, this picture was exhibited at the National Institution a few years ago, but it has greatly improved since then in mellowness of tone: we hope it is not still in the possession of the artist, for assuredly it ought not to be. (*Art-Journal* 1857 215)

The catalogue accompanying the painting at exhibition expressed similar views of the work, but waxed more specifically on the subject of the scene, writing, "When the first boat was laden [with emigrants] the piper played 'cha till, cha till, mi tuille' (I shall

[106] For more collected critical commentary from W.M. Rossetti, particularly covering the works of James Collinson, see Peattie.

return no more); all stretched out their hands to the glen they will never see more, and cried and cried" (Morse 216). The presence of these lines, which proved so potent an expression of emigrant nostalgia in the poetry and writings of Grant and Scott, provide an explicit link between Highlanders, landscape, and the distinctive ties that bind the two, thereby emphasising the sadness and regret of the emigration scene. Other reviewers noted the large size of the work and its inclusion of nearly seventy figures, all of whom had been rendered homeless by clearance events and were subsequently expected to emigrate, and declared that it confirmed McIan's status as one of the "most powerful and sentimental painters of our time" (Morse 216).[107] The periodical reviewers' impressions of Gillies' painting at the 1859 show of the Society of Painters in Water-Colour similarly evince a critical appreciation of both the Highland specificity of the work and the artist's attention to the sympathetic nostalgia evoked by the work. The *Art-Journal* affirms:

> The touching sentiment with which this lady qualifies her works is of a nature to give its full force to a subject such as this. The emigrant is an aged man, who sits on the mountainside absorbed in mournful thoughts; a title is not necessary to declare it a sorrowful leave-taking. (*Art-Journal* 1859 173).

In both cases, reviewers alight on both painters' successful efforts to portray the sadness and regret inherent in the parting scene and, at the same time, provide modern readers with a vivid description that confirms the works' linkage to other contemporary paintings of Highland emigrant subjects in convention, sentiment, and location.

The 1861 work The Parting Cheer (plate 44) by Henry O'Neil portrays a similarly conceived scene that illustrates more directly the action of leave-taking

[107] In her study of the artist, Morse suggests that McIan may have drawn inspiration from the well-publicised evictions at Glencalvie and may even have witnessed other Clearance events during her residence at Fort William (216).

alongside a Glasgow pier and that remains part of the established trend of applying Victorian conventions to the context of emigration from Scotland.[108] Despite the varying reviews of the work, ranging from disgust to high praise of the picture's portrayal of a gritty urban parting day with all of its attendant character types and activities, O'Neil's painting embodies the typical conventions of a Victorian emigration painting alongside the more specific elements attendant on the departure occasioned during the Clearance era. The brightly coloured panorama of assorted figures, all expressing a wide variety of expressions as they wave goodbye to the departing ship, which likewise moves away from the dock full of cheering passengers, presents the viewer with a diverse, intertwined crowd. While O'Neil's painting depicts a number of lachrymose vignettes as despairing onlookers face the growing distance that separates ship from pier, the overall dynamism and activity of the piece create an atmosphere that reveals greater hopefulness than many other emigration paintings of either general Victorian subjects or Scottish emigration in particular, an element that is again emphasised by O'Neil's rather sanitised and gentrified portrayal of many of the onlookers.[109] A number of these onlookers sport tartan garments, forging a strong connection to the Highlands and the Clearance-era events that led to such scenes along Glasgow's piers. The easy identification of the Clyde as the setting for the painting constitutes another specific connection to Highland emigration as the city served as a

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[108] This painting maintains some thematic and visual similarities with O'Neil's 1857-58 work Eastward Ho!, which also depicts a crowded pier-side leavetaking, in this case during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Despite these shared themes and activities, The Parting Cheer has maintained an explicit linkage to the topic of emigration since its appearance at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1858. Reviewers from the *Times* and the *Athenaeum* noted of the work that "the friends and families of emigrants [are] at the very agony of separation" and "the emigrants themselves cheer from the portholes," respectively (Christie's 10 June 1999, 59-60).

[109] Many nineteenth-century reviewers nevertheless expressed great disappointment and disgust at O'Neil's vivid portrayal of the characters involved in the parting scene. However, when viewed in comparison to other Clearance and emigration images, the crowd contained within The Parting Cheer seems distinctly more hopeful and active than other emigrants, such as those in the works of Thomas Faed and Erskine Nicol. Wood also notes this more optimistic atmosphere despite his misleading connection of the work to the parting scene in Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1976 226).

major port of departure for innumerable émigrés throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Rodee 60). The Parting Cheer, therefore, continues the specifically Scottish emigration convention that relies upon the inclusion of landscape and cultural artefacts in the evocation of the Highlanders' parting scene.

While the works of Thompson, McIan, O'Neil, and the other mid-century artists discussed above help to illustrate the great variety of departure scenes that relate directly to Highland emigration and Clearance, they are frequently overlooked in the shadow of one of the most pervasive and persistent images of Clearance-era emigration that appeared in 1865: Thomas Faed's The Last of the Clan (plate 45). This work, with all of its accumulated connotations as an image of inhumane eviction and dispossession and its continuing popularity as an illustration (however accurately or inaccurately portrayed) of Highland emigration, occupies a singularly visible place within the twenty-first-century visual culture of the Clearances, but is nevertheless a product of the mid-nineteenth-century view of emigration and Clearance and, as such, contains many of the same nostalgic sentiments and conventions as the previously discussed works. The painting depicts a group of Highlanders, ostensibly members of the same clan, who have gathered at a pier to attend the departure of the latest ship of emigrants. A crowd of onlookers surrounds the central figure of the old man on horseback and his weeping granddaughter who stands alongside the horse. The old man's deeply bowed head and hunched posture communicate his feelings of hopelessness and sadness that are echoed by the encompassing group of young women, children, and old men, who collectively embody the many "types" of characters, of varying ages and emotions, that commonly appear in the wider realm of Victorian emigration art and that serve to enhance its drama and applicability to the viewing audience. Recalling the contextual clues and emotional conventions of

Wilkie's early works, like The Rent Day, Faed's inclusion of a wide cross-section of figures serves to express the full range of emotion, from sadness and despair to curiosity and anxiety, occasioned by the emigration event while his minute enumeration of accumulated possessions and other particulars, such as the carefully packed trunks and glassware, strewn bits of hay, and many meticulous clothing details, generates a comprehensive context for the scene. The empty landing space in front of the aged man helps to accentuate the increasing distance between the crowd on shore and the emigrant ship, while the collected sailing equipment scattered on the dock, especially the rope about to be untied from its cleat and tossed to the departing vessel, provides visual clues to the presence of the ship. This boat, although not pictured, figures into the perspective of the work, as viewers are placed on the ship a short distance away from the edge of the landing as if to portray the growing separation between land and boat. The action of the painting and its subject matter were further clarified by a caption, written by Faed and exhibited with the picture upon its debut at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy in 1865:

> When the steamer had slowly backed out, and John MacAlpine had thrown off the hawser, we began to feel that our once powerful clan was represented by a feeble old man and his grand-daughter, who, together with some outlying kith-and-kin, myself among the number, owned not a single blade of grass in the glen that was once all our own.[110]

As detailed by the caption, the departure of the emigrant ship left behind a considerable number of people, most of whom are women along with a few old men and young children. The members of this group of onlookers, void of its young men and married couples, help Faed to accentuate further the hopelessness and impending depletion of the clan and to enhance the drama of the parting scene.

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[110] Caption citation provided by Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.

The Last of the Clan depicts emigration as the cause of the sorrowful situation, lending the work a sentimental quality that tempers its realism with nostalgia but that also allows the painting to convey more effectively the scene of emigration to its viewers. Faed's vivid illustration of the distressing consequences of depopulation and his verbal description of the unstable land tenure that characterised eighteenth- and nineteenth-century life in the Highlands display a comparatively high level of realism, albeit tempered by melodrama, nostalgia and sympathy. The artist accomplished this portrayal with a great deal of care, as evinced by the meticulous treatment of individual poses, costumes, and faces as well as the crowd's vividly expressed sadness and distress. However, despite these attributes and its premier place in Clearance imagery, the work exudes a strong sense of nostalgic sadness as it, like the previously discussed paintings of the era, avoids any strong reference to the impoverished conditions that often led to schemes of eviction and emigration (Treuherz 1987 43). Instead, the people in their gently worn clothes and humble poses, and their sadness at the emigrants' parting, are meant to evoke pathos in viewers. For example, Faed portrayed a number of carefully drawn female characters to the right of the horse who, with their neat dress and elegant profiles, do not appear to be "authentic" Highland countrywomen, but are depicted more like members of a comparatively more financially secure group. Even though these women are ostensibly members of the remaining Highlanders, their refined countenances, trim clothing, and elegantly moderated expressions allow the elite audience of the painting to relate more closely to the figures and their predicament. The painting is clearly not intended to provoke political action in viewers but, by instead impelling his audience to absorb the strong emotions of the scene, without causing them to deal also with unpalatable rural impoverishment and land use issues, Faed allowed viewers to

connect emotionally with the scene. Interestingly, Faed's attention to the popularly perceived links between Highlander and homeland also inform this image and serve to illuminate its distinctively Highland subject. The artist's decision to include the accompanying text with the painting and his overt mention of the "glen that was once all our own," in which now, due to the lamentable course of Clearance and emigration in the Highlands, "not a single blade of grass" belongs to the few remaining members of the clan, is vivid evidence of his use of common Highland landscape imagery in the evocation of wistfulness and nostalgia.

Similar perceptions of The Last of the Clan's emotional value and its use of widespread visual and literary conventions appeared in contemporary descriptions of the work and in writings on Highland subjects. The appearance of the painting with its written caption at the 1865 exhibition garnered a great deal of admiration from critics and visitors to the show. In its review of the Academy's exhibition, the *Art-Journal* wrote that Faed was "again in force" and had not "exhibited so good a picture as The Last of the Clan since his greatest work The Cottage Death-bed" (1865 169). The article goes on to describe the details of the scene, first stating that "there is pathos in all that Mr. Faed paints," continuing by quoting Faed's accompanying text, and finally highlighting the characters and emotions depicted in the work, writing of "men stricken in years, aged women bowed in sorrow, maidens melting into tears—characters which dispose into a homely and heartfelt picture of Scottish nationality" (1865 169). It concludes with the recognition that The Last of the Clan's "sentiment would suit to a ballad of Burns" (*Art-Journal* 1865 169). Throughout the article, the *Journal* couches its discussion of the work in terms of its sentimental value and the connection of Burns to the scene, with the richly pervasive symbolism of his poetry for émigrés, vividly illustrate these perceived poetic qualities of the painting and the

scene it represents.[111] Faed's painting was seen neither as a political image nor a call to action on the part of the evicted emigrants, but rather as a "homely and heartfelt picture" that employed Highland events and characters in an effort to maximise the scene's emotional value. Even Alexander Smith recognized the sentimental attributes of emigration scenes in his book, *A Summer in Skye* (1851), in which he dedicated an entire chapter to Highland emigration and discussed the subject at great length. He speculated:

> The English emigrant is prosaic, but Highland and Irish emigrants are poetical...Oddly enough, poet and painter turn a cold shoulder on the English emigrant, while they expend infinite pathos on the emigrants from Erin or the Highlands...The ship in the offing, and the parting of Highland emigrants on the sea-shore, have been made the subjects of innumerable paintings. (Smith 468)[112]

Smith's book was widely influential to the mid-century arts community and his descriptions of the emotional value of emigration scenes and the departure of the emigrants' ship undoubtedly informed many artists' perspectives on Highland subjects. Again, like Faed, and innumerable other painters and writers on the subject, Smith discusses the nearly unbreakable bonds between Highlanders and their homelands as the primary factor behind the depth of emotion involved in emigrations from this part of the world.

The enduring ability of The Last of the Clan to capture successfully this nostalgic feeling underlies its continuing popularity as an expression of the dispossession and human drama of the Clearances, particularly in current-day

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[111] See below for discussion of the Horatio McCulloch painting, My Heart's in the Highlands, an illustration of a Burns song that strongly evokes the memory and experience of Highland emigrants.

[112] Though the subject of emigration in all of its applications was certainly a highly popular subject at the time of Smith's writing, it is curious that he mentions the "innumerable" paintings of Highland emigration available. It has required some effort to uncover the breadth of these works within my research and to extend the appreciation of the subject beyond simply The Last of the Clan.

interpretations that vilify the actions of the landlords in the departures of the people. While this aspect of the historical literature has already been discussed earlier in the thesis, the subject remains highly applicable in the analysis of The Last of the Clan as the painting has again come to represent a popularly acceptable view of the Clearances, though in a manner quite different from its original role as an evocation of pathos and nostalgia. Today, likely owing to the common misconception that it is one of the very few or even the only nineteenth-century painting of Clearance-era emigration, the painting is often employed as an illustration accompanying historical descriptions of the Clearances, whether in academic volumes, tourist guidebooks, or other printed materials touching on the subject of the Clearance and emigration within Scottish history. In many cases, particularly in its appearance as the cover illustration to the recent editions of John Prebble's *The Highland Clearances* (first published in 1963) and its regular appearance in tourist guide books alongside thumbnail descriptions of epochs of Scottish history, the work has undergone a re-interpretation (though inaccurate in terms of its original Victorian connotations) as evidence of the cruelty and inhumanity of the Highland landlords of the Clearance era.[113] The sensationalistic vitriol encased within Prebble's book as he blames the evictions, emigrations, and hardships of the Clearance era entirely upon the actions and inactions of Highland landlords, with consideration neither for the external economic, social, and political forces operating within the land nor for the highly variegated texture of events across that land over time, is symbolic of the attribution of similar sentiments to Faed's painting. The painting has indeed become a figurehead for the expression of these unbalanced portrayals of Clearance history despite its entirely sanitised and apolitical content, which relies heavily on nostalgia and humble sadness.

[113] See the cover of recent Penguin paperback editions of Prebble's book as well as the popular Dorling Kindersley travel guide for Scotland (150) for examples of the painting's use as an illustration of the Clearances, albeit within a simplistic interpretation of the era.

More currently, large size reproductions of The Last of the Clan appeared as illustrations for newspaper articles in *The Scotsman* and the *Scottish Review of Books*, the former a review written by James Hunter of Eric Richards' book *Patrick Sellar and the Highland Clearances* and the latter an article by Michael Fry blaring the controversial viewpoints espoused in his 2005 book on Highland history, both subjects that again reinforce the painting's perceived connections to the unlawful actions and overtly sentimental scenes occasioned through the course of Clearance history (*Scotsman* 18 Dec 1999, 4; *Scottish Review of Books* 6 March 2005, 9).[114] A third article, also appearing in *The Scotsman,* discussed the development of plans for a film about the Clearances and led with the headline "Clearances could bring thousands in" alongside a photo of actor Robert Carlyle posing next to The Last of the Clan (*Scotsman* 6 Dec 2003, 3). The motivation behind the nascent movie is described strictly in terms of tourism, as developers felt that "making a blockbuster movie about the 19th century Highland Clearances could provide one of the biggest boosts ever for tourism in the area" due to the international appeal of the resulting film. While the actual painting of The Last of the Clan was not directly involved with any of these proceedings, the collected press clippings and its appearance in many mass media outlets highlights its new connotations as a singularly popular melodramatic interpretation of the Clearances.

As one of the most persistently visible paintings of Highland eviction and emigration, The Last of the Clan creates an informative contrast with contemporary images of English emigration in a way that illustrates both the similarities in convention as well as the differences in underlying concerns for painters of English

[114] Interestingly, the painting performs an oddly contradictory function in the latter article, as Fry argues for a less emotional historical portrait of the Clearances, in many cases downplaying landlord actions and Highland destitution and frequently mentioning the "myth of Clearance" (8). In spite of his efforts, the painting accompanying the article nevertheless continues to assert its popular picture of Clearance-era emigration and the emotion of the parting day.

and Scottish emigration scenes. For example, the 1858 painting, The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home (plate 46), by English artist Richard Redgrave (1804-1888) depicts a family of emigrants perched atop a ridge overlooking their home valley. The family is presumably on its way to a new dwelling overseas and is taking one last look at their remaining friends, homestead, and native land. Redgrave's painting is brightly lit and the green valley and fertile surroundings attest to the general prosperity of the area. The father waves to remaining residents in joyful anticipation of his journey while his wife and children wear a typical variety of expressions that range from worried (the mother) to solemn (the children). In its review of the work, the *Art-Journal* reacted sympathetically to the subject matter, writing, "We press the hand of the honest emigrant, and pray God speed him to his new home" (1859 165). The *Journal* goes on to reflect further on the value of emigration as an artistic subject, writing, "The severe truth that prevails throughout the description of this material—simple in character, but very trying as an Art-theme—cannot be too highly eulogised" (1859 165). The author of the article appreciates the gravity of the decision to emigrate, highlighting the fact that Redgrave's family has clearly chosen to leave their homeland, which is quite visibly a comfortable and plentiful environment, and look forward to increasingly better opportunities elsewhere. In this respect, Redgrave's painting contrasts sharply with The Last of the Clan, which depicts Highland emigrants as reluctant, cheerless, and nostalgic as they depart from their homelands. Faed's figures are visibly, though gently, poor and exhausted, products of their comparatively more difficult surroundings, and differ greatly from Redgrave's relatively well-off travellers who have chosen to leave their prosperous valley without the fetters of emotional ties that ideologically bind them to their homelands, as is so often the case in Scottish examples. Viewers of both paintings are allowed to regard

the scene from the perspective of the emigrants, as we stand on the ridge with Redgrave's family, gazing out over the green valley, and are situated on Faed's emigrant ship, looking back at the forlorn remnants of the "once powerful clan." The contrasts between the related subjects of Redgrave's and Faed's works stem from the differing situations they depict and shed light on the qualities that make The Last of the Clan an image redolent of the specificities of Highland emigration during the Clearances. The prosperity and choice involved in The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home make more vivid the despairing separation and permanence at work in The Last of the Clan.[115]

The Last of the Clan was a harbinger of a shift in subject matter and style that profoundly altered the ways in which artists of the 1870s and '80s depicted scenes of emigration as well as of the urban and rural working classes and the social problems that haunted their lives. In the larger British art world, the increasing popularity of scenes of rural impoverishment and gritty urban subjects, as well as their concomitant discussion and illustration in news sources, helped familiarise artists and the viewing public with the presence of "poverty, dirt, and distress" in art (Treuherz 1987 13).[116] Many more painted images of the emigration and parting scenes that had occurred throughout the Clearance era emerged from this context in the 1880s, a decade that witnessed the growing agitation of crofters over tenure rights and the extensive

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[115] As mentioned above, there are many examples of paintings that treat similar emigration subjects within an Irish context. See, for example, the works of Erskine Nicol, particularly An Ejected Family (1853, plate 47), The Emigrants (1864), and An Irish Emigrant Landing at Liverpool (1871), as well as Fanny McIan's Exiles from Erin (1838) and The Irish Vagrants (1853) by Walter H. Deverell (1827-1854), among others. It is also interesting to consider the prevalence of the theme of dispossession and migration in an American context, as paintings of the removals of Native Americans also maintained a visible place in the arts community of the United States. See Husch and Hight for a detailed and highly informative discussion of the role of the "doomed Indian" and his role within the western landscape in nineteenth-century American paintings. Husch argues that the majority of these images, as well as the accompanying poetry and literature, were simply melancholic and accepting of the social conditions that presaged migration, much like Victorian paintings of emigration, but she continues to point out the groundbreaking political commentary on the subject embedded into the paintings of artist J.H. Beard (1811-1893). His works, with titles like The Last of the Red Man (1847), form an enticing counterpart and counterpoint to the paintings of artists like Thomas Faed.

[116] The role of social realism in Clearance-era paintings of rural labour is discussed in Chapter IV.

coverage of such subjects in illustrated news sources, such as the *Illustrated London News*. Through the depiction of socially and politically contentious happenings, the 1880s paintings of Highland emigration, including works by J.W. Nicol, Dorothy Tennant, and Robert Herdman carry on the tradition of The Last of the Clan and earlier works in the use of eviction and emigration to evoke pathos and to emphasise the distinctive poetic connections between Highlander and homeland.

Concurrent political and social events and their coverage in illustrated news sources amplified the contexts of the Clearances images of the 1880s since, during this decade, crofters became increasingly vocal in their demand for more stable land tenure and numerous riots took place throughout the Highlands and Islands. These dramatic occurrences, as well as the growing circulation of scathing pamphlets and books on the events of the Clearances, such as Alexander Mackenzie's 1883 publication, *History of the Highland Clearances*, helped to familiarise the public with land use issues in the Highlands and the ensuing evictions and emigrations. The Napier Commission also began to investigate the situation in 1883, marking increased government involvement in the matter that culminated in the passage of the Crofting Act in 1886. This increasingly political response to the Clearances and its aftermath led to more visible coverage of Highland happenings in newspapers, like the *Illustrated London News*, which publicised and illustrated the tumultuous events in the Highlands as, for example, during the crofters' riots on the Isle of Lewis in 1888 the newspaper provided readers with detailed descriptions of the disturbances and the military action taken to quell the rioters. As an added element to the stories, which spanned a number of issues, the newspaper provided illustrative prints, including depictions of the riotous crofters, the police and marines taking action, and the interior and exterior appearance of blackhouses, among others. These stories and images,

especially the illustration of the dwelling interior, provided the public with a visual key to the impoverished conditions of the crofters and their grievances and represent a valuable sector of the visual culture surrounding the Clearances as printed materials gained wider audiences through the nineteenth century.[117]

Lochaber No More (1883, plate 48), by English artist John Watson Nicol (fl. 1876-1924),[118] emerged from this growing political coverage of the Clearances and the increasingly naturalistic visual sources of the 1880s, but also extends the established emigration imagery found in earlier works. The image carries on the evocative tradition of The Last of the Clan in both its use of emigration imagery to the fullest sentimental potential and the literary association of its title, which vividly evokes the nostalgic connection to the landscape of home seen within many paintings of Clearance-era emigration. Nicol's work depicts a Highland couple on board an emigrant ship, visible only through the various ropes and cleats that surround the pair, that is beginning to make its way from the shore. The male figure, in his conventional and geographically specific tartan cloak and hat, leans his elbow on the gunwale of the ship and gazes pensively back to shore, where tiny rural houses and great Highland mountains are barely visible in the rolling fog.[119] The fog moves into the

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[117] Late-century news illustrations, as well as the engravings accompanying texts like Donald Ross' *Real Scottish Grievances* and other works descriptive of the rural distress and changing lifestyle in the Highlands, such as cartoons in *Punch* magazine depicting the rise of deer stalking, offer a further avenue through which to gain insight into the context of the Clearances as it emerged from the Clearance era. Late-nineteenth century photography also constitutes a medium through which to explore very late depictions of eviction and rural dispossession, which occurred decades after the Clearance era (see Cullen 2002 for a discussion of eviction photography in late-nineteenth-century Ireland). Due to reasons of cohesiveness and space considerations, it has not been possible to include these aspects of the visual culture in this thesis, which is intended to focus primarily on the paintings of the era as examples of the wide range of Clearance imagery within Victorian art. The selected paintings which span much of the Clearance era, and later, consequently offer the greatest scope for the exploration of the many facets rural change occasioned by the Clearances and do this by building upon the established course of Highland imagery throughout the nineteenth-century.

[118] John Watson Nicol, although born in England, was the son of the well-known Scottish painter, Erskine Nicol.

[119] The houses on the shore are perhaps themselves illustrative of the Clearances in their placement close to the shore as tenants were often first cleared to marginal coastal lands before they chose, or were forced, to emigrate.

scene from the right and will soon obscure the view of the reflective emigrant as his ship moves farther out to sea, a landscape element that, according to the *Art-Journal*, "offers no comfort to the exiles" (1883 219). In contrast to her companion, the female figure in the scene rests sorrowfully among the pair's luggage, muffling her tears and turning her back to the viewer. She too leans on a plaid blanket while unable to face the receding view of her point of departure. Typically for parting scenes and once again recalling the contextual details of Wilkie and Faed, the couple's material belongings have been carefully packed and surround them in a small display of household cooking wares and clothing trunks. The presence of these domestic goods attests to the pair's impending full-scale removal and to their future labours toward the establishment of a new household at their ultimate destination, thereby illuminating the full scope of the emigrant experience. In a final reference to the established imagery of emigration, Nicol's portrayal of the family dog leaning plaintively against his mistress echoes and emphasises the human emotion of the scene while his placement between the two emigrants unites the figural group.[120]

Lochaber No More is typical in its treatment of emigration with its portrayal of the parting ship and the despairing couple placed amidst their collected household belongings, but is nevertheless notable in its explicit description of these issues in a way that accentuates their nostalgic value and poetic underpinnings. As in The Last of the Clan, the finely depicted emotions of the three figures in the painting along with their various attributes and poses underline the emotional import of the scene of emigration and help to cultivate sympathy in viewers. J.W. Nicol's family is clearly not wealthy, but they are also not visibly poor as their genteel modesty in belongings

[120] The appearance and pose of this dog are highly reminiscent of Landseer's sorrowful sheep dog in The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner (c. 1837, plate 49) and similarly offer an emotive channel for the expression of sentiment in the work. See Chapter IV for Landseer's contributions to Clearance imagery in terms of Highland landscape and labour.

and dress mirrors Faed's depiction of similar conditions on the landing in The Last of the Clan. In addition, the placement of the couple aboard the departing emigrant ship and the understated characterisation of the woman's weeping help the painter to accentuate the emotional content of the emigrants' situation. All three figures in the painting face to the left, back towards their starting point and homes, creating an intriguing comparison to Erskine Nicol's 1864 depiction of Irish emigrants in The Emigrants (plate 50) who literally look forward to the train tracks and their eventual destination. The two couples, while sharing similar emotions and poses (husbands standing and gazing out; wives sitting and displaying more visibly emotional expressions), create vastly different atmospheres and meanings.[121] The relatively relaxed postures and expressions of the Irish couple contrast vividly with J.W. Nicol's backwards-facing, pensive, and tearful group, further highlighting the clearly nostalgic content of Lochaber No More and the amenability of such scenes of emigration to pathetic painting. On account of these attributes, the work is clearly not intended to provoke political reactions among viewers, but the sensitive and sentimental depiction of the couple on board the departing ship nevertheless calls gentle attention to the reality of emigration within many Highland communities throughout the earlier years of the nineteenth century.[122]

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[121] As mentioned above, the topic of Irish emigration and dispossession occurs frequently in Victorian painting and, judging from Wood's glib and unfounded dismissal of the subject (1976 226), seems to suffer from a similar underestimation of its importance within the course of Victorian art. Emigration, famine, and eviction in an Irish context figure into the works of artists like Erskine Nicol, G.F. Watts (plate 51), William S. Burton, William Underhill, Frederick Goodall, John Joseph Barker, Walter Deverell, and Elizabeth Thompson (see Chapter III and plate 10) and their works allude to the greater visibility and cohesive timescale of rural distress in Ireland in comparison to the less uniformly cataclysmic, though equally pervasive, Scottish counterparts. See Cullen, Casteras, Rodee, and Treuherz 1987 for further discussion of these themes in Irish art.

[122] The apolitical nature of Clearance paintings has been discussed in greater detail in the previous chapter. It is interesting, however, to note that Smith and Skipwith claim that Nicol's painting may have been created to "bring into sharp focus the dreadful treatment of the Highlanders, rather than simply producing yet another depiction of the Highland Clearances" (66). This statement is decidedly unconsidered and unfounded as it is clear, from Nicol's express use of established sentimental imagery within his characterisation of the parting scene, that the work extends the existing nostalgic conventions of Victorian emigration scenes to the Highland context. The work certainly draws

The pathetic aspect of the work received further emphasis from Nicol's choice of title, which brings to the painting the syncretic spectrum of nostalgic connotations embedded within Ramsay's song. The poetic "Lochaber no More," as discussed above, provides ample descriptive imagery that relies upon the romantic and wistful role of the home landscape to suggest to readers, listeners, and, in this case, viewers the indissoluble bonds between Highlander and home. Nicol's painting likewise includes an evocative depiction of Highland landscape, rich with easily recognisable conventions like the sheer, fog-rimmed coastal mountains as well as the tiny dwellings nestled along the shore, that serves to emphasise the emigrant couple's impending severance from this place and their consequent sadness during the event. Upon its publication of an engraving of Nicol's painting in 1884, the *Art-Journal* also noted this aspect of the work and easily linked the painting to the land use changes and emigrations of the Clearance era, writing:

> Mr. Watson Nicol is the son of a painter who has rendered Scotch and Irish life with equal industry, but who has studied the Irishman principally for comedy and humour. To many travellers the seriousness of the Irish poor is the most striking trait of the country; but Mr. Erskine Nicol has stuck to the tradition which makes the Irishman...one of the jesters of the world. It is generally agreed that no such character can be predicated of the Scotsman, and Mr. Erskine Nicol's son has in 'Lochaber no More' shown us the tragedy of the Highland shepherd's life. The old man's flocks are gone, his colley and his crook have no further use, but he takes them with him into the banishment of the innocent. If it is true that the natives of mountainous districts cherish most closely the love of the country, the Highlander and the lass who weeps at his knees are leaving the mist-clad hills of home with sorrow keener than that of exiles of more heroic name. (*Art-Journal* 1884 348)

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attention to the place of emigration within the Highlands, but does not illustrate any evidence of "dreadful treatment" or political motivation.

The reviewer vividly appreciates the accumulated pathos that surrounded both the act of emigration and the emigrants themselves, particularly those departing from the Highlands who are characterised as markedly distinct from the easily satirised Irish emigrant. The connections forged between Highlanders and homeland, as expressed in the poetry of the era, and the reviewers' sense of the "banishment of the innocent" that has befallen the old man and other Highlanders strengthens the sentimental import of the scene for the artist's audience and overtly links the work to the ongoing rural distress and disruption of tenure that pervaded the Highlands during the nineteenth century. Nicol's decision to name his painting of emigration after the well-known verse serves to underline his affinity with the singularly poetic aspects of specifically Highland emigration and accentuates the added nostalgic content such an association brings to his scene.

The prevalence of the imagery absorbed and expressed by Nicol becomes vivid when his work is compared to a slightly later painting by Dorothy Tennant (fl. 1879-1909). This work, The Emigrants of 1886 (plate 52), has unfortunately been destroyed, but the photograph that remains reveals Tennant's painting to be a remarkably similar depiction of a Highland parting scene. Her grouping of the male and female figures and their young child alongside their collected belongings and surrounded by the rigging of the emigrant ship strongly recalls the figural placement in Nicol's work of three years earlier. Although the emigrants' expressions are considerably more determined and trusting than those of the man and woman in Lochaber no More, their humble mien, impending emigrant journey, indicated by the label on the trunk, and the hints of receding land provided by the presence of seabirds, visibly link Tennant's work to the larger group of emigration paintings of the era.

Another Highland emigration image of the 1880s, Landless and Homeless:

Farewell to the Glen "Maybe to return to Lochaber no more" (1887, plate 53) by Scottish artist Robert Herdman (1829-1888) also employs poetic connections and similar visual conventions to highlight the impending departure implied in the subject of the painting, but extends the existing imagery beyond the shipboard scenes of artists like Faed and John Watson Nicol. Unlike the pictures of the previous artists, Herdman's work depicts a newly evicted couple at the door of their modest thatch-and-stone dwelling, preparing to leave their home and collected domestic belongings. This couple, much in the manner of earlier emigration images like The Last of England, evinces a dual perspective regarding their future prospects, as the male figure gazes anxiously into the distance while his wife looks resignedly ahead. The grizzled and aged man maintains a thoughtful look, his posture and plaid echoing those of the central figures in The Last of the Clan, while the large dog again serves to enhance the emotions of the human characters in the scene and provides a counterpoint to their distant expressions in his attentive stare at the man.[123] The dooryard of the house is brimming with messy clutter, including tools and other implements that elucidate the varied employment and resulting material conditions borne by the erstwhile inhabitants, but the neat clothes, clean scarf, and clear complexion exhibited by the woman seem to belie the distress that her bare feet also denote. These mingled signs of distress, want, and cleanliness mirror the similarly mixed characteristics exhibited by Faed's emigrants, and others, and help Herdman to exploit more effectively the sentiment of the scene by emphasising the gentle and unthreatening poverty of the evictees and by encouraging his audience to relate more closely to the figures.

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[123] In some episodes of Clearance-era emigration, such as the infamous efforts pursued by the Sutherland estate factor Patrick Sellar in the 1810s, the old and infirm members of villages and households were frequently unwilling, or unable, to relocate according to the landlord's plans and consequently remained in their homes until the last possible moment (Richards 2000 141). Hints at this type of situation appear in The Last of the Clan as well as in Landless and Homeless.

These sentimental aspects combine with the poetic imagery evoked by the title to provide a striking image of eviction that appealed to viewers' sympathy. The reviewer from the *Art-Journal* clearly apprehended this intent, praising the work for "illustrating a Highlander's feelings in leaving his cottage and 'croft,'" his words and specific citation of the crofting landscape of north-western Scotland explicitly linking the scene to Highland emigration during the Clearance era (1887 125). Furthermore, the lengthy title of Herdman's Landless and Homeless evokes the often-employed imagery of "Lochaber No More" and calls upon other Clearance poems, especially "Bonnie Strathnaver," by John Stuart Blackie (Errington 1988, 16):

> Bonnie Strathnaver! Sutherland's pride,
> With thy stream softly flowing, and mead spreading wide;
> Bonnie Strathnaver, where now are the men
> Who peopled with gladness thy green-mantled glen?
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> Bonnie Strathnaver! Sutherland's pride,
> Sweet is the breath of the birks on thy side;
> But where is the blue smoke that curled from the glen,
> When thy lone hills were dappled with dwellings of men?
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> Bonnie Strathnaver! O tearful to tell
> Are the harsh deeds once done in thy bonnie green dell,
> When to ricks of the cold blastful ocean were driven
> The men on thy green turfy wilds who had thriven,
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> When the lusty-thewed lad, and the light-tripping maid,
> Looked their last on the hills where their infancy strayed,
> When the grey, drooping sire, and the old hirpling dame
> Were chased from their hearths by the fierce-spreading flame,
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> Bonnie Strathnaver! Sutherland's pride,
> Wide is the ruin that's spread on thy side;
> The bramble now climbs o'er the old ruined wall,
> And the green fern is rank in the tenantless hall,
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> Bonnie Strathnaver! Sutherland's pride,

> Loud is the baa of the sheep on thy side,
> But the pipe and the song, and the dance are no more,
> And gone are the brave clansmen who trod thy green floor.
> Bonnie Strathnaver!
>
> Bonnie Strathnaver! Sutherland's pride,
> Vain are the tears which I weep on thy side;
> The praise of the bard is the meed of the glen,
> But where is the charm that can bring back the men
> To Bonnie Strathnaver? (Blackie 146-148)

As discussed in the introduction, Blackie was an inveterate traveller, poet, and Gaelic expert who also became an involved and outspoken supporter of crofters' rights during the later decades of the nineteenth century and his poetry, especially "Bonnie Strathnaver," reflects his deep interest and concern in the matter. The poem is rich with environmental references and symbolism, which aid Blackie in his depiction of the sadness of depopulation and of the close relationship between the former residents of the far northern Highlands and their natural surroundings. Indeed, upon visiting Sutherland, and more particularly Strathnaver, during one of his Highland sojourns, Blackie recalls witnessing

> vast heaps of ruined clachans, whence the people had been driven to make way for the economical reform commonly called the big-farm system; and when arrived at the bottom of the strath on the sea-coast, I found myself in the midst of one of those marine cities of refuge into which the ousted crofters had been huddled; those of them at least who had not found their way to America. (Blackie 1872 xxxix-xl)

Such a moving scene, and Blackie's close knowledge of the economic and social conditions informing the resulting settlement patterns and use of the landscape, drove him to compose "Bonnie Strathnaver" as a result, further evidence of Blackie's keen admixture of landscape observation with current events. Herdman was clearly familiar with contemporary discussion of the crofters' situation as his painting reflects

a similar atmosphere of sadness and desertion and calls upon Blackie's established imagery. He also recognised previous works dealing with Clearance-era emigration by artists like Faed and J.W. Nicol and drew upon this existing emigration imagery to intensify the scene's ability to evoke pathos in viewers through the use of poetic connections and nostalgic landscape associations.

c. Emigrant Letters To The Highlands and Retrospective Views of Emigration

As within the larger scope of mid-century Victorian paintings dealing with the theme of emigration, many paintings of Highland emigrants also portray the scene centring on the receipt of a letter, whether from home or abroad. Although the works of James Collinson are perhaps the best-known representatives of this subject, Thomas Faed also produced several specifically Scottish examples treating the theme of letters within emigrant households. His works, which include First Letter from the Emigrants (1849) and News from Abroad (1890, plate 54) portray the range of reactions and situations involved in the communication between recent emigrants and their relatives back home (Payne 66). The Emigrant's First Letter from Australia to his Wife (1874) by Charles Lees (1800-1880) and William McTaggart's 1865 work Word from the West also fall into this category and continue to express the strains of nostalgia that characterise examples of this subject area. McTaggart's work, now lost, "depicted a cottage interior with an old woman listening to an emigrant's letter being read aloud" (Morrison 2003 168), a scene that emphasised, like many other parting scenes, the role of those often elderly members of communities who frequently remained behind following the emigration of younger men, women, and families. These works, due to their reliance upon the geographical distances and specific places inherent in the sending and receiving of emigrant letters, rely upon this continued nostalgia in the expression of emigrants parted from the familiar people and

landscapes of home.

The above artists' portrayals of emigration from the position of the departing Highlanders looking beyond the horizons of their original homes while maintaining their connection to these lands in a nostalgic way is a valuable perspective as many other mid-century images of Highland emigration treat the memories of emigrants looking back to their homelands from new settlements in Canada. The 1859 work A Coronach in the Backwoods (plate 55) by George Simson (1791-1862) combines the two themes of letters and newly-arrived immigrants by illuminating the plight of the recent Scottish settlers in Canada, not only describing the work involved in the manipulation of the new landscape but also evoking memories of the Highlands through its reference to the parting coronach. The work centres on an immigrant family who have recently received a letter bearing news from home, an event that has caused the wife to weep, while the husband plays a melancholy lament on the pipes. A log cabin stands behind the pair while the implements of manual labour, such as an axe, surround them and allude to the hard work involved in the clearing of the forest for settlement. Simson's somewhat contrived combination of visual references to the Highland homeland, in the bagpipes and letter, with the distinctive attributes of the Canadian environment, which was often characterised by its vast tracts of forestland, serve to illustrate the insurmountable psychological and physical divide that separates the green immigrants from the land they have recently left. His overt division of emotions, between the overwhelmed and weeping wife and the stoic yet nostalgic husband, further emphasise the pair's plight as they maintain rather monumental positions within the surrounding forestland. These specific environmental clues, about both the Highlands and the new terrain encountered in emigrant destinations like Canada, firmly locate the work and are common indicators of the emigrant

experience that recur in other views of transatlantic relocation that will be discussed below. Simson's painting furthermore relies on the role of music and song as a potent reminder of departed homelands in a way that not only recalls the relationship between song and emigration in the poetical works of Anne Grant and Allan Ramsay, but that also draws easy comparison to the role of pipers and song in the departure paintings of Fanny McIan, John Watson Nicol, and Jacob Thompson. The distinctiveness of the bagpipes as a Highland instrument, and the well-known laments and other nostalgic songs that could be performed on the pipes to evoke the memory of the area, underlines the import of the appearance of pipes in emigration paintings and serves to emphasise Simson's evocation of emigrant nostalgia in the work.

Thomas Faed, a contemporary of Simson, painted another well-known example of this type of retrospective depiction of emigration in 1859 as well. Sunday in the Backwoods of Canada (plate 56) illustrates the strongly sentimental atmosphere that characterises Clearance-era paintings of emigration and that, once again, employs landscape imagery in its characterisation of the departed emigrants, a typical trait of Clearance visual culture. The painting made its Royal Academy debut in 1859 and received many favourable reviews for its depiction of emigrant lives in Canada. The *Art-Journal*, for example, proclaimed that it was "of the rarest excellence in its line of subject" in its depiction of "not only the peaceful Sunday-morning worship, but the entire condition of two families of Scottish emigrants" (1859 166). In the painting, Faed portrays the material culture of the emigrants' lives as well as their feelings about their situation in Canada through the group of carefully characterised figures in the painting. As the *Art-Journal* noted, "Then there is the mother, affectionately tending her daughter who is dying for the one she left behind" (1859 167). A tired father, leaning his forehead on his hand, reads the Bible in the centre of the work

while the children of the scene listen dutifully, but listlessly. A small family group consisting of two parents and their two young children occupies the lower right corner of the painting. They huddle closely as the mother worries over a sick baby and the father gazes sternly towards the viewer. After discussing the primary characters of the scene, the *Journal* article continues by describing the painted allusions to Scotland, mentioning the potted heather plant and the portrait of Burns, elements that serve further to reference the emigrants' homelands and to illustrate the strength of their surviving connection to Scotland by invoking cues to the distant landscape of home (1859 167).

These contextual clues, in combination with the surrounding Canadian forest, clearly locate the scene and offer viewers a counterpoint between the distant, nostalgia-rich landscape of Scotland with the thickly forested and laborious terrain of Canada. Another nearly contemporary work, Life in the Backwoods (by 1861, plate 57) by John Ritchie (fl. 1858-1875), offers a considerably more rustic depiction of emigrant life in its portrayal of backwoods family, ensconced in thickly forested, and roughly settled, surroundings.[124] While Ritchie's work does not relinquish many clues to tie it to the Clearances, or even to specifically Scottish emigration, it nevertheless offers a highly detailed, and almost Pre-Raphaelite, enumeration of the specifics of rustic living, like the newly hewn trees, simple cooking implements, and makeshift shelter alongside a catalogue of tree species and biological particulars.[125]

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[124] Ritchie's work was initially exhibited at the 1861 Liverpool Academy and more recently appeared at auction at Sotheby's (7 June 2005). Much of Ritchie's biography remains unclear, but it is known that he worked from an address in Edinburgh until about 1853, when he transferred to London (Sotheby's 7 June 2005, 30).

[125] Although the background information provided in the Sotheby's catalogue does not link the painting explicitly to the North American landscape, Ritchie's use of the word "backwoods" in the title strongly implies a Canadian setting, as this term frequently referred to emigrant landscapes in North America. The catalogue further observes of the work: "No indication is given of how the family might be supported, nor whether they are indigent or living permanently in the forest. During the 1850s and '60s many people were forced off the land because of falling grain prices and consequent agricultural

This uncultivated North American landscape featured in the works of both Faed and Ritchie frequently received notice for its wealth of trees, as noted by the narrator of "'Venus' nan Gaidheal/'Venus' of the Gaels" who wrote, "although I have been for a while/lying in the heather,/I have a great desire to go over/to the land of the trees" (Meek 198). This poet's characterisation was echoed by other observers, among them the Reverend John Stewart, a missionary in Cape Breton, who described in an 1835 letter the condition of immigrants upon reaching Canada:

> Many of our people left their country without the means of paying their passage...when they have been here a few years round comes the Captain's agent for principal and interest. Money they cannot have— their cow is taken and perhaps their lands...and the unhappy family must begin a new lot in the forest. (Campey 2004 144)

The notoriety of the North American landscape and artists' usage of it to suggest the geographical displacement occasioned by the emigrant experience informs Faed's painting of the backwoods and contributes a further element to the existing visual culture of Highland emigration in Victorian art.

In addition to Faed's retrospective view of Scotland from Canada, artists also painted views of emigrants in other immigrant settlements, notably in Australia and New Zealand, that continue to highlight the differing surroundings that had been shaped and tempered by immigrant labour and their memories of Scotland. For example, The Emigrants (c. 1845, plate 58) by Elizabeth Walker (1800-1876) depicts the recently arrived Mackay family, who departed Sutherland for New Zealand in 1844, amid their new surroundings (Hewitson 25). The large grouping of family members, with their rich clothing, assorted pets and livestock, and great store of belongings, including various trunks and chests, stand proudly and possessively on

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depression. Ritchie seems to be here documenting the privations suffered by those who were dispossessed during this period of rural hardship" (Sotheby's 7 June 2005, 30).

the shore, backed by shipping traffic in the bay and the silhouette of New Zealand's craggy mountains. The patriarch maintains a central and commanding position and, as his hand rests on a plough, conveys certainty regarding his family's future prosperity. Walker's overstated portrayal of each immigrant's meticulous Highland dress and her consideration of their established prosperity and continued future success distinguish the atmosphere of this work from other examples of immigrants in new settlements, but her attention to the family's origins and the assumed continuance of national pride within a new land recalls the similar tendencies of other painters who continue to emphasise the immigrants' strong bonds to their homelands.

Another painting that rather more obliquely depicts the plight of recent émigrés from the Highlands is Horatio McCulloch's 1860 work, My Heart's in the Highlands (plate 59).[126] While not dealing directly with the appearance of Highland emigrants or their efforts at settlement in Canada, McCulloch's painting treats the supposed memories harboured by emigrants for their homelands, once again recalling the perpetual landscape nostalgia that pervades so many contemporary accounts and poems regarding the Highland emigrants of the era.[127] McCulloch (1805-1867) was undoubtedly one of the best-known Scottish landscapists of the nineteenth century, an achievement attested by the *Art-Journal*, which acknowledged upon the artist's death "the might of a genius that has left no equal in Scotland; nay, rather, perhaps, we might say, no equal in his own walk of Art in any country in Europe" (1868 88).

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[126] Joseph Farquharson also painted the same theme in his work, My Heart's in the Highlands, which was shown at the 1890 exhibition of the Royal Academy. See *Art-Journal* 1890 (219).

[127] Two additional examples of this reflective, dream-like type of emigrant painting are Thomas Faed's works Oh Why Left I My Hame (1886, plate 60), which portrays an aged man on the shores of Lake Ontario and Thoughts of Home (1862, plate 61), which depicts a contemplative young woman amidst an antipodean landscape. Interestingly, Faed's lake more closely resembles a Highland loch, with its mist-shrouded mountains and bare rock faces, than the North American surroundings of Lake Ontario. Like The Last of the Clan, this painting was also accompanied by a caption supplying the story behind the image. It read: "Old Dougal still wears the kilt. I saw him the other evening sitting on the shore of Lake Ontario, gazing at the setting sun. I am afraid his heart was far away in his old croft on the slopes of Ben Durach. Old men should *not* emigrate" (Casteras 12). The title is taken from "The Emigrant's Lament," another common poem of wistful and nostalgic emigrant emotion.

While on first inspection My Heart's in the Highlands appears to be an image of an idealised Highland landscape, its connection to the area's past tides of emigration comes through in its working title, as McCulloch had initially thought to call this painting An Emigrant's Dream of his Highland Home, a title that, according to Morrison, makes stronger the "emphasis on the people-land bond" with its "added allusion to severance and loss" (S. Smith 85, Morrison 2003 100). The work, with its rugged mountains and serene loch, evokes the most recognisable elements of northern scenery, and also incorporates tiny Highland dwellings to lend a human quality to the picture. Despite these realistic inclusions, the painting is clearly a non-specific image of the Highlands and maintains its idealised qualities through the ethereal light of the clouds as well as the elusive rainbow and picturesque castle ruins. McCulloch's imagined emigrant, looking back upon his native land, sees only the familiar and gentle aspects of the area that remain unreachable in the painting due to the intruding presence of the dark, rocky foreground that limits access to the idyllic scene. This quality, along with the alternative title to the work, again evokes the strong linkages between landscape, emigration, and nostalgia that characterise other works dealing with the theme of Highland emigration in nineteenth-century painting.

Since McCulloch's My Heart's in the Highlands was originally painted as an illustration for the book, *Illustrated Songs of Robert Burns*, it maintains a close connection to the poetry of Burns and, as such, offers evidence for the popularity and relevancy of the bard's poems to Highlanders and emigrants. *Illustrated Songs of Robert Burns*, an 1861 publication of the Royal Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland, featured five paintings by notable Scottish artists that illustrated various poems by Burns and was intended as a book of prints for subscribers to the Society (*Art-Journal* 1862 128). The five chosen poems and their accompanying

illustrations reflect Burns' strong connection to the country life and landscape in Scotland as the verses feature descriptions of fine views and traditions of rural life, such as country fairs.[128] Throughout his lifetime and well after his death, Burns' audience strongly accentuated his identity as a "rustic genius" and a "noble peasant" who was firmly rooted within his rural community (Campbell 39-42). Due to this association, his works maintained a close linkage to country life, making them especially poignant when applied to the experiences of evictees and emigrants. Drawing from Burns' personal history and continuing popularity, McCulloch's work exhibits a strikingly close connection to Burns' poem, "My Heart's in the Highlands," in its faithful rendering of the scenes described in the poem:

> My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
> My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer,
> A-chasing the wild deer and following the roe--
> My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go!
>
> Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
> The birthplace of valour, the country of worth!
> Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
> The hills of the Highlands forever I love.
> Farewell to the mountains high cover'd with snow,
> Farewell to the straths and green valleys below,
> Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods,
> Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods. (Burns 223)

McCulloch's wandering deer, distant mountains, green valleys, and wild forests echo the imagery expressed by Burns in the poem and the overall image re-creates the experience of Burns' emigrant departing from the Highlands. This imagery evoked in both poem and painting also recalls the emigrant poems discussed earlier in the chapter, as Grant, Grahame, and Ramsay employed vivid landscape imagery to convey the sense of nostalgic separation that colours the emigrant experience,

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[128] The other paintings in the collection were: Ca' the Yowes to the Knowes by George Harvey; Last May a Braw Wooer by Erskine Nicol; Lea Rig by James Archer; and Logan Braes by Alexander H. Burr (*Art-Journal* 1862 128).

particularly that of the departing Highlander. The persistent association of Highlander and homeland, and the assumption of powerful ties between the two despite the geographical severance initiated by emigration, informs artists' depictions of emigration from the area and serves to contribute an additional textual layer to Clearance imagery, further distinguishing it from the larger body of Victorian emigration paintings.

A final, unifying note within this portion of Highland emigration paintings occurs in the works of William McTaggart (1835-1910), whose series of three major 1890s paintings of Highland emigration portray the continuing retrospective view of Clearance and emigration at the end of the century. Before the appearance of these three works, however, McTaggart painted a version of the persistent theme, Lochaber no More (plate 62), which was engraved to accompany an 1866 volume of poems by Allan Ramsay. McTaggart's interpretation of the verse, unlike other works employing the same inspiration and title, remains more loyal to the original theme of the song in its depiction of a young couple parting as the soldier prepares to set out for war. However, in its use of landscape conventions, such as the Highland hills dotted with sheep that surround the couple, and symbols of impending departure, including the beached rowboat and its cargo of travelling trunk and bundle, the work displays the elements characteristic of the greater group of parting scenes. The series of three later works produced by McTaggart throughout the 1890s draws on these elements in its increasingly painterly portrayal of the departure scene and the northern land- and seascape. Due to the paintings' appearance many decades after the most infamous episodes of the Clearances, the three works are memories of the processes and effects of Highland emigration, especially in their evolution from the portrayal of hustle and bustle at the shore to the desolation and loneliness that followed the emigrants'

departure. McTaggart's three works reflect the pattern of earlier Clearance paintings through their use of the parting scene and through their retrospective point of view on the Clearances and serve to intertwine more overtly the presence and role of emigration within the surrounding Highland landscape.

The three instalments of the emigration series depict active scenes of leave-taking while illustrating McTaggart's stylistic explorations. The first painting, Emigrants Leaving the Hebrides (1883-1889, plate 63), centres upon a boat landing and the various characters who have gathered on the shore either to watch the departure of the emigrants or to emigrate themselves. A large sailing vessel sits moored further out in the bay while a number of smaller rowboats serve to transport both people and goods to the larger ship. Overall, the painting is characterised by vibrant blues and yellows and a painterly technique that helps McTaggart convey the choppiness of the sea and the activity on shore. The Emigrants—America (1891-1894, plate 64), McTaggart's second contribution to the group of three, accomplishes a similar representation within a larger format. Here, "collies wait beside their masters' luggage, women wave, couples embrace, and skiffs begin to pull out with passengers toward the distant ship" (Errington 1989 106). In a new addition to the established imagery, a box marked "America" in the lower right corner of the painting confirms the identification of the work as an image of transatlantic emigration. The second painting carries on much of the first's activity on the landing through its lively brushwork that bespeaks McTaggart's stylistic directions as well as his interest in the busy action of the scene. The final painting in the series, The Sailing of the Emigrant Ship of 1895 (plate 65), enlarges the theme of emigration in its portrayal of the lonely desolation following the emigrants' departure. This painting, which displays a cooler palette of purples, blues, and greens, depicts the emigrant ship on the horizon, moving

away from the landing on which occurred the commotion of the previous two paintings. Instead of the crowd with its collected luggage and the brimming rowboats, the landing is now peopled with the ghostly forms of individuals who did not emigrate: an aged couple, a howling, sorrowful dog, and a few other grieving figures, all established conventions of earlier Victorian emigration paintings. The emigrants' ship moves out into the open ocean toward clearer skies and under a tiny prismatic rainbow, perhaps symbolising the travellers' hopes as they sail toward their destination. Like the other two images, this painting is characterised by McTaggart's continuing exploration of colour and brushwork as the means of depicting Clearance subject matter.

As with earlier works picturing the Clearances, including The Last of the Clan, McTaggart centralised the nostalgic and literary content of the scene. All three paintings focus on the representation of emigration as an incident full of emotion while the somewhat vague depictions of people, boats, and luggage help to move the scenes toward the realm of memory. Although McTaggart conceived of the initial series instalment as a painting of his sister's voluntary mid-century emigration to North America, his awareness of the growing body of clearance protest and literature of the 1880s gave his works an increasingly historical perspective on the Clearances.[129] McTaggart's outdated and old-fashioned sailing ship, for example, is a relic of the evictions and emigrations of the early nineteenth century, lending credence to the idea of the paintings as retrospective scenes (Errington 1989 106). Such depictions seem increasingly fitting in light of their creation dates of the 1890s, a full half-century after the emigration scenes they portray, and the memorial content of the three scenes is further demonstrated by the links McTaggart created between

[129] See the Tate Gallery website (http://www.tate.org.uk).

painting and the literary sphere. After viewing McTaggart's second canvas, The Emigrants—America, a colleague of the artist described its poetic connections in his own words:

> Mr. McTaggart sat and described what he meant to represent...I managed to make out some parts of the design which he spoke of, but when he mentioned that there was a piper, and that he was playing "Lochaber no More," I looked for this figure in vain, and it struck me as extremely odd that the artist should not only know about the piper, but also what tune he was playing, when with all my efforts I was quite unable to find the musician anywhere. (Errington 1989 106-108)

Although this contemporary viewer experienced difficulty in perceiving McTaggart's "design," he was still able to link the finished painting to the emotional qualities that McTaggart included in the work. The connection between the painting, as a memory of Clearance-era emigration, and the song "Lochaber no More," a frequently cited reference for emigration emotion, serves to attach the work to nostalgic poetic realms, as accomplished in earlier works like The Last of the Clan, Lochaber no More, and Landless and Homeless.

McTaggart's paintings, with their painterly technique and expressive movement, however, differ greatly from the detailed, specific, and static portrayals of Highland eviction in these earlier works and the observable differences these qualities create within the function of his works distinguishes them further from earlier paintings by artists like Faed, Nicol, and Herdman. For example, the small size of McTaggart's figures in comparison to the whole expanse of land, sea, and sky and the shared brushwork that joins, and almost overwhelms, these figures within the scheme of the surroundings lessens the overall impact of contextual details, which are nonetheless included, that play so crucial a role in the establishment of narrative and context in The Last of the Clan, Lochaber no More, and others. The labelled trunk in

the second work and the old man in the final instalment create links to these earlier images, but remain secondary elements within McTaggart's overall characterisation of the scene. This difference in narrative structure, composition, and style marks out McTaggart's paintings as more fully representative of a retrospective view of the parting scene by limiting the immediate scope of the work on favour of a wider view, a distinction that receives full expression in the final work of the series, The Sailing of the Emigrant Ship, in its portrayal of the departed emigrant ship from the perspective of the shore. Such a viewpoint marks a clear departure from other paintings of the parting day, which focus on the activities of the emigrant journey, as in Thompson's work, on the imminent departure of the ship, like in The Last of the Clan, or, like Nicol's effort, on the journey itself. At the end of his series, McTaggart's emigrants have unquestionably left, and viewers are relegated to the shore alongside the remaining Highlanders, who virtually disappear within their surroundings.

In this way, McTaggart's series is applicable to the experiences of Highlanders throughout the decades of Clearance and emigration. Indeed, as one 1899 critic wrote of The Emigrants—America, "It is the epic of depopulation, emigration and of quests in foreign lands. It tells of laments abroad for 'my ain countrie,' and of breaking hearts at home. It is a greater, more thrilling and powerful 'Lochaber no More'" (Errington 1989 108). Morrison takes a similar view of the three works, remarking, "the historic setting suggests that, for McTaggart, the Celtic culture of Scotland was past, ended by the prolonged haemorrhage of people" (2003 210). This retrospective view on the place of emigration within the Highland past necessarily invokes the previous history of departures from the Highlands as well as the aforementioned works of poetry treating the same subject, while McTaggart's near stylistic conflation of emigrants with their surrounding landscape forcefully conveys the close linkages

between Clearance-era emigration and the resulting appearance of the Highland landscape, a subject that forms the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter VI
Landscape: Changes in the Land

> If when you are in the Highlands, you would still see them as they are in the stupid romance of Scott or in the sickly sentiment of Landseer, or as a mere pleasure-ground for tourists and sportsmen, you must get the people out of your mind, just as the laird gets them off his estate. Go everywhere, by stage and steamboat, and when you come to a clachan or to a lonely cottage, shut your eyes and pass on; else you must realize, as we did—and more strongly as we went farther—that this land, which holiday-makers have come to look upon as their own, is the saddest on God's earth. (Pennell 35)

While travelling at the behest of *Harper's Magazine* in the 1880s, American tourists, writers, and artists Joseph and Elizabeth Robins Pennell recorded their impressions of the Highlands and Islands for the magazine's audience in the United States, relaying written images filled with landscape observations and travel particulars. Their comments, particularly the excerpt quoted above, form the beginnings of a chapter in the study of tourist imagery in Scotland by historian Katherine Haldane, who employs the couple's words to suggest that they extracted less-than-typical notions about the northern landscape of the country and its appeal to tourists. Haldane goes on to argue that the Pennells' observations of the lonely and deserted landscape, along with their considerably more conventional ideas about Scottish weather and terrain, are an unusually honest appraisal of the actual state of the Highlands, unlike the opinions of the vast majority of other travellers and writers who chose to apply preconceived ideas, drawn from myriad sources of visual and literary descriptions, of national landscape and character to their journeys in the north of Scotland (311-313). The Pennells' comments sum up the preceding century of fluctuating interactions between the varying encounters of tourists, residents, and observers with the Highlands and the

experience of the land itself, as it provided a canvas for the ecological and social transformations of the Clearance era. The words of Mr. and Mrs. Pennell form part of a reaction to the Scottish landscape that underlined the disconnect that occurred (and, I would argue, still exists), between common and accepted Victorian impressions of the landscape, as evidenced in popular literature, tourist guidebooks, and other sources, such as songs and poems, and the changing texture of that land as it underwent the series of dramatic alterations that so markedly characterised the Clearance era. These changes in land holding, agricultural practises, population distribution, and ecology fundamentally altered the appearance of the Highland landscape during the nineteenth century and, while some tourists recognised the effects, many others did not, thereby augmenting the already-popular view of the Highlands as a place of largely undisturbed and unpopulated wilderness, perfect for the contemplation of travellers, writers, and painters. Interestingly, however, it is the works by painters of Highland scenery and landscape that help to bridge this gap and serve to illuminate more fully the scope of nineteenth-century paintings that record and reflect the multifaceted legacy of the Clearance era. Works by artists like Horatio McCulloch and Peter Graham, among many others, employ Victorian landscape conventions in their treatment of the Highlands, which constituted a consistently popular and effective subject for painting throughout the nineteenth century that served a variety of interests, from the picturesque landscape to the stormy wilderness, and occupied a visible place within the artistic, literary, and touristic world. Furthermore, in their depictions of increasingly deserted and stormy Highland landscape, often marked by the presence of sheep or deer and the absence of people, these paintings also subtly record the changes wrought in the landscape by the events

and after-effects of the Clearances, a quality that often received little notice in other media.

Art historian John Morrison notes this under-appreciated attribute of many early- and mid-nineteenth-century landscapes in his book, *Painting the Nation*, a study that presents a number of new perspectives on the subject of Scottish art and its relationship to the development of national identity and, in this case, ideas of national landscape. Morrison is among very few art historians who describe the effects of the rising tide of emigration, expansion of sheep farming, and growing popularity of deer parks upon the physical Highland environment and the concurrent appearance of such effects in the landscape paintings of the era, writing of the popularity of works like Horatio McCulloch's Glencoe (1864) and the landscapes of Joseph Farquharson and Arthur Perigal, among others, that celebrate the Highlands while at the same time subtly calling attention to the fundamental alterations in land use and settlement inherent in the creation of such a landscape. He briefly describes the "profound, forced" changes, including the introduction of deer and sheep alongside the reduction in the human population of the area, that shaped the land and the resulting group of landscape paintings that, "whatever their intention and surface values, must inevitably commemorate Clearances and emigration" (2003 109). Murdo Macdonald echoes this view briefly, acknowledging that McCulloch's works, most visibly Glencoe, portrayed a selective reality and were essential components in the visual re-orientation of the Highlands into "a wilderness instead of a populated space" (105). Other historians of Scottish art, like David and Francina Irwin and Duncan MacMillan, have only obliquely alluded to these trends by noting the popularity of McCulloch's Highland paintings and the longevity of his imagery within the landscapes of later artists, like John MacWhirter and Peter Graham (Irwin 356-362, MacMillan 219).

William Hardie off-handedly dismisses McCulloch altogether, declaring that, despite the "authentically romantic" qualities of the artist's pictures, the bulk of the work carries a "rather mundane sensibility: Glencoe has little to add to what had been said once and for all ten years earlier in Landseer's Monarch of the Glen" (22). With these responses within the existing art historical literature, it is clear that, even in his concise mention of the subject, Morrison offers a distinctive discernment of the interactions between land use and landscape in artists' impression of the Highlands and subsequently perceives the apparent disjunction between the popularity of this celebrated landscape and the means through which it developed into its current state.

In contrast to Morrison's observations, and the additional brief allusions mentioned above, other studies and compilations of Highland landscapes, like Marcus Halliwell's well-illustrated but poorly analysed *Highland Landscapes: Paintings of Scotland in the 19th Century*, have frequently employed a narrow and simplistic view of the land and its evolution into a popular artistic and touristic commodity. While Halliwell's publication offers a wide-ranging collection of Highland paintings and is a valuable visual source, the accompanying text and landscape analysis provide an entirely conventional and thoughtless approach to the depicted landscapes. For example, after briefly outlining the course of landscape painting in the Highlands, Halliwell concludes, "Highland views remain popular even now, and indeed for much the same reasons, not least the sense of isolation, an image of nature largely untainted by civilization, which remains an inspiration to artists" (7). Clearly, the idea of "nature largely untainted by civilization" is entirely incorrect as the Highlands were, of course, inhabited through past centuries and Halliwell ultimately conveys the disappointingly widespread view that runs contrary to the purpose of this thesis in ignoring the human presence and population that shaped the Highland landscape, both

in terms of its presence and absence. In his contrast with Halliwell and other "chroniclers" of the Highland landscape, Morrison is one of a small collection of art historians, including James Holloway and Lindsay Errington, who have begun more fully to join environmental history with art history in an analysis of landscape paintings, particularly those of the Scottish Highlands. This heretofore solitary position seems especially unusual in the case of the Highlands, given the remarkable and long-lasting popularity of the landscape of the area throughout the nineteenth century and into the present day as well as the potency and visibility of the Clearances as a subject in historical literature and popular culture.

1. Environmental Perspectives of the Clearances

Fortunately, some Clearance historians and historical geographers have commenced academic investigations into the varied ecological and cultural effects of the Clearance era within the Highland landscape and the resulting studies provide crucial insight into the evolution of the physical environment and its concurrent appearance and depiction within nineteenth-century landscape paintings. Historians like James Hunter have delved into this area of research and produced interdisciplinary studies that combine historical exploration with enquiries into literature, poetry, and geography in an effort to trace the course of landscape history alongside contemporary developments in its role, appearance, and usage.[130] Hunter's stress on the "archive of the feet" and the fundamental role of landscape observation in historical research reveal his view of the primacy of this aspect within a subject as dependent on environmental considerations as the Clearances (2000 4). Indeed, upon my own initial encounter with the subject of Clearance during an archaeological

[130] See both The Making of the Crofting Community and On the Other Side of Sorrow: Nature and People in the Scottish Highlands.

excavation of a blackhouse on the Outer Hebridean Isle of South Uist in 2000, it became inescapably clear that an exploration into the history of the era required an examination of the Highland landscape, as the effects of changing land use, agriculture, and settlement patterns remain decidedly visible features in many areas of the Highlands. At the outset of the dig, and as an introduction to both the history and geography of the setting, the leaders of the expedition stressed to the participating students that, even before the excavation commenced, the lie of the land provided clues to the past events of the area. Following a few minutes of instruction regarding topography and geography, it became easy to spot the now-grassy clustered mounds of deserted dwellings, demarcated strips of old crofting plots, corrugated hillsides of lazy beds for potato cultivation, and the remains of coastal shelters for kelp harvesting and burning, clear evidence of the course of rural life on the island during the events of the Clearance era. Such a tangible connection between the Highland landscape and the formative events of the Clearance era mark the environmental perspectives on the area as crucial determinants of the landscape studies, poems, and paintings of the nineteenth century. These perspectives form a part of the current-day historical and geographical writings on the subject of both Highland history and landscape.

a. Contemporary Perspectives

Hunter likewise recognises the value of these landscape features while he describes the extant remains of the subdivisions, reformations, and reuses of Highland estates as landlords reorganised their holdings to reflect a pattern they believed would create a more efficient and profitable holding. Furthermore, he characterises the development of the crofting districts in the northwest as a major physical and conceptual reorganisation of the landscape into geometric segments and analyses the subsequent application of the segments to subsistence activities (Hunter 2000 68-71).

These tangible changes to the division of the land and its use in supporting the tenantry form a major part of Hunter's investigation of the landscape within the scope of the Clearances and he extends this perspective in his discussions of other aspects of Clearance history, namely, the impact of sheep and the expansion of sheep farming. He argues, "If there is one creature which is symbolic both of the ecological and of the social damage done to the Highlands by the Clearances, that creature is the sheep" (1995 79). Hunter proceeds to note that the increasing presence of sheep throughout large districts of the Highlands in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries altered not only the ways in which the landscape was inhabited and worked (as sheep farming required little labour and plenty of grazing lands), but also initiated a shift in the ecology and plant life that covered the landscape (1994 79). The increasingly visible presence of sheep within the Highlands, and the concomitant alterations in land use, occupation, and ecology, served to direct more tangibly the ways in which the land appeared to residents and observers.

These ecological alterations, which perhaps can be measured and analysed more concretely and objectively than the social or political effects they generated, have been discussed in several examples of landscape history, social geography, and human ecology that have emerged alongside growing interest in these academic disciplines during recent decades. Geographers like R.N. Millman and David Turnock have provided greater support for the recognition of the interactions between Clearance history and the Highland landscape in their large-scale studies of the development of the Scottish landscape and its historical geography. In his 1975 book *The Making of the Scottish Landscape*, the first attempt to study this aspect of landscape history within Scotland, Millman aligns his work with the previous studies of geographer/historian James Caird as he argues towards the view that the Highland

landscape that is visible today is primarily a product of the "deliberate creation" led by the actions of landlords and tenants within the social and economic strictures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Millman 13, Caird in Parry/Slater 203). Historian Robert Dodgshon goes further and claims, "Across all aspects of Highland life, the environment is not just a setting but an active partner, one that in places can be accommodating and benign, but in other places, unyielding and utterly uncompromising" (7). The events of the Clearance era, in particular the decades from 1780-1830, which witnessed the brunt of sheep clearances and estate reorganisations, served an instrumental purpose in the creation of the Highland landscape, a tenable claim that Millman supports with ample documentary evidence from both historical and geographical disciplines (130). The photos accompanying the text also effectively illustrate this point as they allow the author to show highly visible instances in which landscape reflects the particular history of a locale, including Helmsdale in Sutherland and Borve on the isle of Barra, where the Duke of Sutherland's tenant resettlement attempts in a planned village and the overlaid geometrical crofting landscape, respectively, are apparent (plates 66 and 67). A further valuable aspect of Millman's study rests in his determined intention to separate the bitterness and drama of Clearance-era evictions and land-use alterations, citing the more romanticised and dramatised accounts of these happenings, from the effects of such events upon the landscape (130). In his writings regarding the historical geography of Scotland, David Turnock takes a similar stance regarding the historical and popular interpretations of the events of the Clearances and again stresses the importance of placing the landscape in the forefront of such discussions in order to assess more effectively the ways in which the changes in land use effected

during the era altered the appearance and function of the Highland landscape (1995 78, 182).

Discussion about the role and aspect of this landscape today elicits a variety of responses from observers in many fields, including history, geography, and even tourism, whose remarks often call, both directly and obliquely, upon the lasting marks left on the Highlands by the previous two centuries of environmental and demographic changes. These comments, which range from the aesthetically appreciative to the downright bitter, help to demonstrate the persistent debate over the efficacy of the evolution of land use in the Highlands and illustrate the areas of disagreement concerning the appearance, use, and meaning of the resulting landscape. For example, environmental historian James Winter effectively outlines the course of sheep farming in the Highlands in his study of environmental perspective in the Victorian era and fully recognises that the ecological results of long-term and large-scale sheep farming, including soil erosion and exhaustion and lack of biodiversity within ground cover, have not been beneficial to the health of the land (66). However, Winter diverges from his ecological standpoint and applies subjective descriptors to his discussion of the landscape replaced by these sheep-farming trends by opining that the older tradition of holding lands in common and divided among various field systems for grazing and agriculture created within the Highlands a greater landscape beauty, full of a variety of texture and colour, and one that was humanised, not barren or unpopulated (67). After the demise of this system and the rise of sheep farming, among other changes wrought by the Clearances, Winter now sees in the modern-day surroundings a "constant and poignant" signifier of "a culture torn asunder and a land expropriated" (69). His imposition of emotional qualities upon the landscape is a common perspective, as seen in Hunter's views above, and is

one that continues to inform observers' views of the Highlands, though not always in as nostalgic a vein as Winter's words. Millman writes of the deserted settlements that pockmark the north and west of Scotland, noting that such a landscape often

> evokes a nostalgia amongst many visitors and residents in Scotland today, who have perhaps, too little regard...for the sheep walks and deer forests of the Highlands which displaced this outmoded form of occupancy, and which often combine to provide the most attractive and diverse elements in the modern Scottish countryside. (1995 102)

Clearly, Millman sees the land use changes as effective and necessary and also as contributors to an improved appearance of the Highlands, whose "artificial semblance of 'wilderness'...appeals to many tourists today" (1995 135). This ongoing debate illustrates not only the pervasive character of environmental issues within the study of Highland landscapes, particularly those emerging from the events of the Clearances, but also demonstrates many of the highly divergent views espoused by historians and other observers who see within that landscape evidence of positive change and beauty alongside poignant reminders of the area's erstwhile inhabitants and land holding systems.

Perhaps the most extreme examples of such views within an academic framework again occur in the works and writings of Hunter, who, while realising the full potential of environmental enquiry within historical studies, also tends to occupy the outermost position in regard to the current perception of the resulting Clearance landscape as one inescapably rife with symbolic function. He writes:

> The unpopular character of these landscapes, it has been shown, are every bit as symbolic of the eradication of human communities as they are suggestive of wild nature. And the elimination of humanity from so much of the Highlands, it has been stressed, has been merely the most dramatic manifestation of exploitative processes which have also

> subverted an entire culture. Already it begins to be apparent why Highlanders can be so aggravated by those environmentalists who, knowing little of Highland history, tend to see in such localities such as Achadh nan Seileach nothing more than 'unspoiled' country of a sort that ought to be kept always in an uninhabited condition. (1995 37)

Here, Hunter hits on a few instructive points in his discernment of the lasting effects of the course of Clearance events within the Highland landscape as well as in his pinpointing of the persistent regard for such landscapes as locales of outstanding beauty and "wildness," and which are therefore necessarily unpopulated. At the same time, however, his words reflect the enduring establishment of links between the appearance of the Highlands and the timeline of past events and the often-romanticised tint applied to this lens by historians, tourists, and others who are familiar with Clearance history.

b. Nineteenth-Century Perspectives

Like the Pennells quoted at the outset of this chapter, some observers contemporary with the Clearances also astutely linked the physical conditions of the Highlands with the recent alterations in land use and holdings as well as with the emigration attendant upon these changes. The newly available body of Gaelic poetry, for example, provides accounts and descriptions of the insiders' views of the onslaught of pastoral and agricultural changes wrought in their home landscape over the course of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Many of the poets represented in Donald Meek's collection of Gaelic poetry in translation describe their observation and consequent anger regarding the changes within the Highlands, such as the increasingly omnipresent sheep, who reside in the grazing lands at the expense of both native Highlanders and their formerly more diverse herds of livestock, as well as the deserted dwellings and scenes of emigration that now punctuate the hills.

Sorley MacLean noted this tendency as well, stating that "one of the central themes of Clearance poetry is the contrast between unchanging nature and human desolation" (63). In the early 1800s, poet Allan MacDougall expressed these ideas and attempted to reconcile the arrival of Lowland sheep farmers on his landlord's estate with his concern for the loss of Gaelic culture and accomplished this through the use of environmental, and even ecological, descriptions in the poem "Song to the Lowland Shepherds:"[131]

> A calamity has befallen us in Scotland;
> poor folk are starkly exposed before it,
> without food, without clothes, without shelter;
> the north has been devastated;
> only sheep and lambs are visible,
> Lowlanders surrounding them on every slope;
> all the lands have gone to waste,
> chickaweed has grown over Highlanders' heads.
>
> Cows with calves are not seen in a glen,
> or horses, hardly, being harnessed;
> it was the essence of the prophecy
> that the plough would become redundant... (Meek 186-189)

MacDougall's sentiments and ecological concerns are echoed in a work by a later poet, William Livingston, writing from Islay in the 1860s, whose "main theme is the ecological transformation of Islay as a result of 'improvement'" (Meek 20). He too employs sheep as symbols of the ongoing "improvements" and describes the "houses once owned by those who have left us" that "lie in cold heaps throughout the land" (Meek 201), further evidence of the pervasive effects of the changing economies and settlements of the Highlands at this period. Livingston closes the poem with the lines:

> The district of the Oa has been stripped bare,
> the beautiful Lanndaidh and MacKay's Rinns;
> sunny Largie with its many hollows
> has a pathetic remnant on its slope;
> the Glen has become a green wilderness,

[131] Further discussion about the poet's relationship to his chief and landlord, whom he served as bard, is available in Meek (51-52).

owned by men of hatred without tenants or crops..." (Meek 202)

Here, MacDougall vividly portrays the changes within the landscape that have resulted from the transfer of the estate into the hands of sheep farmers and also recognises the departure of the tenantry and their traditional ways of agriculture and land holding that still mark the hills of Islay.[132] A final and slightly later example of the environmental perspective in Gaelic poetry can be found in "Manitoba," a work composed by John MacLean upon the event of an emigration from Tiree in 1878:

> The free-holders of land at this time are obsessed
> with dragging the world's riches away from the rest;
> and foolish devices will always be tried in the Highlands
> to disperse the people and put sheep in their place.
>
> I can see nothing at present except sheep on the hillsides;
> only a couple of Lowlanders can be found in a glen;
> and the few who have remained on the ocean's headlands
> are being driven down to the shoreline and flayed by rent.[133] (Meek 205-206)

From the words of these poets, it is clear that Highlanders fully grasped the close correlation between changing systems of pastoralism and subsistence with the appearance of the landscape and the accompanying social and cultural transformations. The seriousness of these alterations and the subsequent bitterness expressed by the poets in terms of environmental and social changes firmly establish the link between Clearance history and the Highland landscape.

Beyond the insiders' realm of Gaelic poetry, other observers of the Highlands, including tourists like the Pennells as well as scientists, surveyors, and other more artistic-minded travellers, were able to link pervasive landscape changes to the

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[132] It is also intriguing that MacDougall refers to the now under-populated land as a "green wilderness." This is a term that is still frequently employed in descriptions of the Highlands and always seems to depend upon an appreciation of the lack of human population in the area. The adjective "green" also appears to denote a definite lack of multifaceted land uses, such as grazings, agricultural areas, and house plots, which seemingly would have imparted a greater variety of patchworked colours upon the landscape.

[133] These last two lines are particularly emotive as they reference the common practise of resettling tenants from interior estate lands suitable for grazing to marginal coastal areas, where subsistence was meagre and difficulties were often exacerbated by rent increases, thereby occasioning emigration.

concurrent episodes of estate reorganisation and tenant resettlement, and to view the resulting alterations in the landscape. Early travellers' impressions, including those of Johnson and Boswell, which have already been discussed, provide invaluable accounts of both the recognition and ignorance of the effects of increased sheep farming and Clearance within the Highland environment.[134] Other early sojourners to the area at the turn of the nineteenth century included engineer and surveyor Thomas Telford, whose close interactions with the layout and composition of the landscape allowed him to provide readers of *The Scots Magazine* with a surprisingly perceptive account of the ongoing emigrations from the Highlands and the relationship of these events to contemporary shifts toward greater use of the land as sheep runs. His article of 1803 clearly illuminates his perspective of the efficacy and profitability of raising sheep in lieu of cattle as a viable change to Highland subsistence and also sheds lights onto his views of the new plight of the existing population of Highlanders, who were becoming increasingly "redundant" to landowners at the time. Telford writes that emigration had largely been driven by "converting large districts of the country into extensive sheep-walks," a use of the land that "requires much fewer people to manage the same tract of country, but in general an entirely new people, who have been accustomed to this mode of life, are brought from the southern parts of Scotland" (329). He goes on to describe the changes wrought in the physical landscape by the introduction of larger-scale sheep farms and predicts that, as the prices for sheep and wool products stabilise, the land will eventually attain its ideal usage, with most of the tracts still devoted to sheep, but with other areas allocated to cattle-raising and agriculture. In addition to the influence of the sheep, Telford also cites the tenants' lack of employment, swelling population numbers, and ability to underwrite

[134] See Bray and Cooper for introductions into the variety of travel writings about the Highlands and Andrews, Klonk, Stafford, Smout 1983, and K. Haldane for further discussion into the role of scientific exploration and tourism in the Highlands.

emigration through the sale of cattle as motivating factors behind the recent emigrations from the Highlands, but continues by placing the greater part of the blame upon the actions of the landlords in their efforts at "changing the economy of their estates" (329). As these estate changes progress, Telford quite clear-sightedly warns:

> that it is a great hardship, if not a great injustice, that the inhabitants of an extensive district should all at once be driven from their native country to make way for sheep farming, which is likely to be carried to an imprudent extent; that, in a few years, this excess will be evident; that before it is discovered, the country will be depopulated (330).

He closes the article with an encouragement to the government to pursue more extensive programmes of public works and road building, which will serve to enhance communication within the region and to employ Highlanders and allow them to remain in their homes. Throughout the article, Telford displays remarkable insight into the interactions between economics, environment, and community that continued to shape the appearance and use of the Highland landscape.

In an informative comparison to the views and observations contained within Telford's article, the writings of the Sutherland estate manager James Loch provide the landed perspective on the environmental and landscape changes effected by the schemes for estate reorganisation. Loch, who coordinated plans for many of the massive clearances and resettlements in Sutherland around 1820, viewed the creation of the tenants' planned village at Helmsdale and the resulting cleared landscapes of the estate interior with pride and noted the improved appearance of this interior landscape in a letter to Lady Stafford: "They [the hills] are getting so much greener, especially those under sheep, in fifty years [heathing?] hills and the Gaelic tongue will be rarities in Sutherland" (Richards 2000 169). This positive perspective receives a counterbalance in the contemporary writings of Alexander Sutherland who, in 1825,

travelled to and observed sites of clearance in Sutherland (Richards 2000 175). Sutherland wrote, "All was silence and desolation. Blackened and roofless huts...and a few domestic fowls...were the only objects that told us of man. A few days had sufficed to change a countryside, teeming with the cheeriest sounds of rural life, into a desert" (Richards 2000 175). Loch's perception of the greatly enhanced landscape contrasts sharply with Sutherland's portrayal of the depopulated area as a "desert," while the observations of both writers enhance the more reasoned views of Telford. The impressions of all three, however, testify to the inseparable nature of landscape change and Clearance-era activities.

Two mid-century observers, art critic P.G. Hamerton and Skye sojourner Alexander Smith, reached similar conclusions, though with the assistance of greater evidence within their Highland surroundings to attest to the linkage between Clearance and landscape. Their subsequent writings and artistic perspective provide further background to the characterisation of the Highlands embodied in many of their contemporaries' landscape paintings. Smith's and Hamerton's mid-century descriptions of Highland travels informed other artists' perspectives by accentuating the artistic uses of the landscape while also making notice of the results of Clearance-era depopulation. Smith, while undertaking the travels for his 1851 work, *A Summer in Skye*, provided some clues about the effects of the previous decades of Clearance on the physical landscape during his larger discussion of the various tourist towns as well as the vistas and characters that he meets on his trip to Skye. For example, when Smith writes that "sheep farming is a picturesque condition," he alludes to the shift in land use and population that occurred as a result of the changing economic pressures during the first decades of the nineteenth century (A. Smith 150). Smith concludes his work with a chapter entitled "The Emigrants," a section that contains a much more

direct reference to the Clearances of the previous decades and their relationship to the Highland landscape as he writes that, due to their close relationship with the land of their birth, Highlanders have a "horror of emigration" especially in the face of the coercion and despair that often attends such emigration (A. Smith 470).[135] Throughout the work, with observations on painting, Highland scenery, and the history of the region, Smith's discussion makes a vivid link between the Highland landscape and its recent Clearance history. Furthermore, in the 1862 publication, *A Painter's Camp*, artist and art critic P.G. Hamerton treats the results of depopulation while discussing his travels throughout the Highlands with his portable painter's tent. His choice of destinations, including desolate mountains and remote lochs, and his excitement in locating the most sublime aspects of Scottish scenery imbue the work with a distinctly aesthetic atmosphere. Interestingly, the land that he describes is frequently void of inhabitants. While Hamerton revels in the "sublime vastness" and "splendid panoramas" that he encounters on his journey, he nevertheless also notes the ancient and recent history of the region, mentioning the "chieftains of old" and their descendants who were "sent into exile to make a desert for English grouse-shooters" (Hamerton 63). With this small, but significant, statement about the effects of elite sport and the related evictions upon the landscape, Hamerton provides readers with a reason behind the desolate and uninhabited landscapes that he encounters in the Highlands. As in Smith's work, this relationship between the landscape of art and of Clearance helps to establish the link between these two spheres.

[135] See Chapter V for a discussion of emigration within the Clearances and Victorian painting as well as Smith's views on the subject.

2. Victorian Landscape Conventions and Changing Views of Highland Scenery

Despite the convincing arguments and descriptions presented in the writings of the Highland observers above and the ways in which the events of the Clearances so visibly affected the appearance of the northern landscape, the vast majority of Victorian, and earlier, writers and readers did not detect the seeming contradictions behind the current reportage of pervasive Highland emigration, destitution, and land-use changes and the growing appreciation for Highland scenery, which was forged into an increasingly attractive subject as it grew bereft of people and the evidence of habitation. As the landscape of Scotland became enmeshed and viewed through the lenses of the picturesque, sublime, and romantic as well as the burgeoning touristic accounts and descriptions, the resulting perceptions belied the role of that landscape as a canvas for the ongoing demographic and economic crises that marked the Clearance era. These two strands, the artistic appreciation for the Highland landscape and the notation of the vast changes occurring in that landscape, often appeared side by side in newspapers and other periodicals of the times, illustrating the popularly divergent views of the Highlands during the nineteenth century. Interestingly, it is the landscape paintings of the period that frequently portray both strands in their depictions of the best known aspects of Highland scenery through a conventional visual framework which includes implicit evidence of Clearance inherent in the landscape.

To uncover examples of the dual nature of the Victorian reading public's view of the Highlands, it is merely necessary to glance through a periodical or newspaper of the times, like the *Illustrated London News*, which reported the following in 1847: "It is impossible for any one to go to that country [the Highlands], to breathe its fresh and bracing air, to see its beautiful scenery...without receiving the most favourable

impressions. I beg to propose as a toast, Prosperity to this Society and the Highlands of Scotland" (ILN 1847 vol. 1, 194). Following his toast to the attendees of the 1847 Festival of the Highland Society of London, the *Illustrated London News* reported, Prince Albert and his fellow members were treated to a bagpipe concert that featured such patriotic Scottish songs as "Prince Charlie" and others. Throughout the festival, the bekilted English members of the society wished for the preservation and expansion of Highland national spirits and habits, an ironic undertaking as a large number of native Highlanders concurrently faced the damaging effects of the potato blight upon their major source of food. In fact, the newspaper preceded its discussion of the Highland Society with a series of vivid reports on the famine conditions in Ireland and north-western Scotland and even publicised Queen Victoria's efforts to institute a day of fasting for the British Isles as a means to recognise the subsistence disasters and to "show humility before God" (ILN 1847 vol. 1, 167). Furthermore, during the same year, the *Illustrated London News* also provided readers with a description of a print depicting Glencoe, the well-visited and -painted Highland site, asking, "What tourist in the Highlands has not visited Glencoe, one of the most savage and utterly desolate of these northern glens?" With its "iron-like ridges of eternal rock," "heathy slopes and wastes stretching away," and "gloomy naked hill," the much-admired area of Glencoe was one of the most recognisable images of the Highlands and had been luring artists and tourists to northern Scotland for decades (ILN 1847 vol. 2, 160).[136] These strangely contrasting and disconnected news reports illustrate the duality inherent in the public's perception and reception of the Highland landscape as a place of fashionable travel and romantic "traditions" and as the setting for famine, Clearance, and emigration.

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[136] Glencoe also gained renown for its historical associations with the 1692 MacDonald massacre (see Gilpin 1.160-166).

Krisztina Fenyo similarly notes this tendency in the newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century, pointing out:

> The grim reality of the depopulated Highlands was disregarded and replaced by an imaginary landscape of romance and poetic beauty. Side by side with accounts of clearance and stern denunciations of the 'inferior' Gaels, newspapers ran romanticised diaries of tourist trips and popular poetry depicting the Highlands as a sort of reservation of grand romantic scenery. The real inhabitants of the Highlands were conspicuously missing here, yielding to an imaginary poetic land given over to poets and tourists. (6)

She continues further by noting that, due to the pre-existing popularity of the Highlands as a subject for popular landscape and a well-established route for picturesque tourists, the increasingly deserted Highlands became an ever more valued locale for the lack of inhabitants (Fenyo 6). In addition to the popularly appreciated depopulation of the lands, the area also gained renown for its growing resemblance to a deserted "wilderness," a pervasive and admired quality that distinguished the Highlands and more closely aligned the appearance (or perception) of the area to the determinants of conventional taste and style of the era.

The writings of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travellers, scientists, and landscape theorists in the Highlands illustrate the development of this perspective on the landscape as one reliant on ideas of a deserted wilderness. Early travellers like Thomas Pennant and Samuel Johnson, who sojourned in the Highlands in 1769 and 1772, respectively, and the published accounts of their journeys offered readers glimpses at heretofore little known scenery, inhabitants, and ways of life. While Johnson's perceptions of the area were predictably aligned with the prevailing conceptions of the northern landscape, with its marginal cultivation and subsistence methods, as one sorely lacking in utility and consequently viewed as excessively

rugged, hopeless, and sterile, Pennant's ideas reflect a greater degree of interest in the distinctive scenery of the Highlands (Pennant 1772, Andrews 198, Fenyo 19-20, 27). His observations included praise of the "naked" mountains and rugged terrain and led him to claim: "The scenery of this valley is far the most picturesque of any in the Highlands, being so wild and uncommon as never fails to attract the eye of every stranger of the least degree of taste and sensitivity" (Fenyo 27). Other travellers, too, noted the attractiveness of such a landscape, revealing the changing notions of beauty and scenery that characterised landscape perspectives in the late-eighteenth century, though perhaps not as perceptively as the Gaelic poets and later writers like Telford, Smith, and Hamerton discussed above. Although Fenyo is keen to detect growing waves of romanticism in portrayals and descriptions of the Highlands, beginning with the writings of Pennant, she fails to mention the role of William Gilpin, Edmund Burke, or other eighteenth-century aesthetic theorists in determining and guiding this trend of landscape appreciation within, and beyond, the parameters of the picturesque and the sublime, undoubtedly a crucial initial step in the evolution of Highland scenery in both written and painted media.

Burke's 1756 *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* initiated a trend in eighteenth-century aesthetic theory by categorising scenery into beautiful and sublime, a dichotomy that relied upon the instinctive emotional responses elicited within viewers and that moulded the perception of particular landscape features into conventional ways of viewing landscape (Hipple 84-92, Hussey 55-58). Burke's espousal of the sublime as category distinct from the beautiful in its ability to evoke feelings of terror and awe in spectators through the conveyance of obscurity, vastness, and irregularity offered particular resonance to viewers of Scottish scenery as it created favourable aesthetic

conditions for greater appreciation of mountainous landscapes (Hipple 87-90). However, as "sublimity alone cannot make an object picturesque," and therefore suitable for painting, the 1789 publication of Gilpin's treatises on picturesque travel and the picturesque aspects of southern Scottish scenery gave readers and artists a new perspective on the visual worth of the area and offered an incitement to explore the instances of picturesque scenery in Scotland (Hipple 197, Hussey 13). Gilpin applied the term "picturesque" to "such objects, as are proper subjects for painting" and expressed a decided preference for compositional elements like framing as well as qualities of variety, roughness, contrast, and irregularity (Hussey 112, Hemingway 20-21, Glendening 252).[137] Although these principles illustrate Gilpin's stated preference for Claudean landscape ideals, which favoured gentle rolling countryside over mountainous landscapes, he remained an early instigator of the expanding interest in Scottish scenery, writing that the area's gloomy, melancholy atmosphere is "allied to [the picturesque]; and gives a tinge to the imagination of every traveller, who examines these scenes of solitude and grandeur" (Gilpin 2.133).[138] In this case, Gilpin's notions of the picturesque landscape become linked to Burke's ideas of the obscurity, power, and vastness of sublime nature. While Gilpin recognises that such qualities are not "entirely of the picturesque kind," he nevertheless notes their close, complementary relationship to the picturesque (Gilpin 2.133). Scotland thus provided for landscape observers, tourists, and artists "the picturesque in conjunction with pastoral beauty and mountain-inspired sublimity" (Glendening 253), qualities that initiated a conceptual shift in the appreciation of scenery in the area.

Along with the influence of Burke, Gilpin's espousal and encouragement of the picturesque and the associated values it imposed upon the landscape kindled a

[137] See also Andrews' essay in Copley/Garside (282-283).
[138] See also M. Andrews (202-204) and Hipple (193-197).

growing interest in artistic and picturesque tours of southern Scotland, and later the Highlands, which served to enhance the dual role of the land as a scenic locale and as a canvas for Clearance events. Beginning at least as early as 1759, ever-increasing numbers of tourists travelled to areas like Loch Katrine and the Trossachs and, later, the Perthshire Highlands and beyond, to experience first-hand the landscape features and historical sights described in well-read landscape treatises as well as those distinctive sites discussed and portrayed by other travellers to the area, like Thomas Pennant and Paul Sandby (M. Andrews 200, Glendening 234, Womack 62-63, Christian 18-22).[139] Similar travelogues and other descriptions of tours and touring in Scotland occupied increasingly central places in the travel publications of the decades around the turn of the nineteenth century, as the number of titles published per decade grew from three in the 1740s to over fifty in the 1810s (Durie 21). By the end of the eighteenth century, "all of Scotland was perceived as a tourist's paradise," a quality that the writings of Sir Walter Scott served further to enhance in the following decades (Glendening 234). His works, like *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), a piece that extolled the landscape of Loch Katrine, and "The Lord of the Isles," which popularised images of the remote surroundings of Loch Coruisk on Skye, offered irresistible impetus to tourists to see the locales he described in works.[140]

The long-lasting influence of Scott's writings, and the encouraging effect his works operated on the development of Highland tourism and landscape painting, are clearly echoed in the works of artist and travel writer John T. Reid, whose illustrated travelogue of artistic rambles through the Highlands and Islands offered readers of the

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[139] See Smout 1983 for a wider array of tourists and tours through the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Highlands.

[140] For further discussion of the development of tourism and the associated cultural imagery in Scotland, see K. Haldane, Gold/Gold, and Durie. Loch Coruisk was another highly emotive locale for landscape painters and writers: J.M.W. Turner painted there in the 1830s, as did later artists like John MacWhirter, whose works of the area are also mentioned by Reid (102).

1870s this advice regarding the Loch Katrine landscape portrayed in *The Lady of the Lake*:

> The tourist who would enjoy aright these scenes should not be contented with the meagre quotations in the guide books, or only read in the poem the little bit referring to a particular scene, but drink in the whole poem; thus every spot will suggest associations that will greatly enliven the landscape, and often give him a key to understand the people. (Reid 30)

Scott consequently played a major formative role in the development of popular taste and interest in Highland "customs" (which were not particularly authentic in the first place) through his writings as well as through his organising efforts during George IV's first visit to Edinburgh in 1822 (Morrison 2003 48-52, Glendening 227-229). Scott planned the festivities and costumes and directed the whole affair to demonstrate the distinctiveness of Scottish traditions, vis-à-vis the customs of the Highlands, the sustained popularity of which are visible in the *Illustrated London News* descriptions of the proceedings of the Highland Society in 1847. This growing enthusiasm for Scottish costume and custom, albeit manufactured, and the simultaneous appreciation for the Highland landscape, with its associated perceptions as a deserted wilderness, served greatly to inform the experience and portrayal of that landscape through the nineteenth century.[141]

The paintings that emerged from this atmosphere vividly demonstrate the aforementioned strands of aesthetic interest in the distinctive Highland landscape. As interest in Burke's ideas grew and melded with the growing scope of picturesque influence, the application of sublime ideals like awe-inspiring grandeur, transcendent vastness, and gloom became apparent in the depiction of such scenes in artistic output

[141] See Morrison 2003 for a detailed account and discussion of this development of Romantic Highlandism and its effects on visual culture and national identity. Glendening also offers a discussion of Scott's role in spreading this pervasive Highland ideal.

from the turn of the century to the later decades of mid-century and onwards (Cosgrove 1998 226-232, Womack 64).[142] The persistence of these conventions in the perception of Highland landscapes remains highly evident in the painted landscapes that emerged from these decades, which will be discussed below, as well as the reception of these works within the arts periodicals of the times. For example, the 1869 exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy included nine works by Arthur Perigal, who, according to the reviewer from the *Art-Journal*:

> is strong this year both numerically and meritoriously. Of his nine canvases, we would particularise...the largest and best, the 'Mountain Scene in Sutherland,' which speaks a sublime language to the heart of the intelligent spectator. (1869 106)

The words of this reviewer emphasise the continuing influence of sublime, and picturesque, ideals in Highland landscapes of the mid-nineteenth century and further stress the usage of this aesthetic "language" among artists and viewers who are already familiar with its conventions. The application of this visual framework to existing Highland landscapes clearly informs nineteenth-century responses to the physical scenery, allowing visitors and artists the opportunity to distinguish specific features, like sublime mountains or uncultivated glens, within their surroundings, a trend that facilitated the elision, though not complete elimination, of Clearance-era effects within the painted landscape, which will be discussed below.

Despite the obvious import of the roles of Gilpin, Scott, and other purveyors of Highland landscape and customs to the main theme of this chapter, it is unfortunately impossible to delve more fully into the effects of their activities upon the development of Victorian perspectives on northern scenery within this thesis. My

[142] Here, Womack employs the case of Loch Lomond to illustrate the disjunction between the picturesque and the sublime (64).

primary focus is, of course, the collection and investigation of paintings related to the Highland Clearances, particularly those works, like landscapes, which previously have received only limited analysis in the context of these most formative events within the Highland environment. The more widely studied aspects of the argument, like the relationship between Scott and Scotland, have formed the basis of many other enquiries into the visual culture of nineteenth-century Britain and into the development of Highlandism and the perpetuation of Scottish myths and symbols and these relevant texts have been cited in footnotes whenever possible. The brief discussions provided above serve primarily to introduce these issues to the argument of this chapter and to provide appropriate reminders of the spectrum of Victorian landscape perspectives on the Highlands in an effort to create a multi-layered framework for the discussion of the relevant Clearance-era landscape paintings.

In spite of the brevity of the preceding discussions of the development of Victorian landscape perspectives, it is clear enough that the distinction between the appreciation of the Highlands as scenery and the perception of the land as the setting and counterpart of destitution, emigration, and changing economies of land use were able to co-exist quite effectively in nineteenth-century mindsets and cultural productions. Although some perceptive observers, like Telford and Alexander Smith, were able to view, and perhaps simultaneously to reconcile, both of these strands within the landscape, the reports of newspapers and the writings of other figures, like Gilpin and Scott, make clear the duality that became commonplace in written descriptions of the Highlands from the turn of the nineteenth century onwards. In this context of oddly contradictory and yet equally present landscape views, the paintings that emerged during the era seem also to take on a superficial resemblance to the blind appreciation of Highland scenery made more appropriate for art due to its inhospitable

ruggedness and emptiness. However, when examined in light of the environmental history of the Clearances, the paintings ultimately provide a link between the elision of Clearance-era change in Victorian landscape perspectives and the visible expression of this change within the Highlands.

3. The Paintings

The visit of George IV, against a backdrop of growing interest in Highland customs and scenery within the larger context of Scotland as a whole, marked the "official" beginnings of a flourishing visual and touristic culture of the Scottish Highlands, a tradition that was fully established by the time of Queen Victoria's initial short visit to Scotland in 1842. Building upon her enthusiasm for both landscape and lifestyle in the Perthshire Highlands, the Queen purchased the Balmoral estate in 1848 and her presence and interest in the Highlands sustained and encouraged the perpetuation of the dual perception of the Highland landscape. On the one hand, the environs and her experience of them, as well as the experiences of the legions of tourists, writers, and artists that proceeded to flood the Highlands, provided a source of great intrigue in their association with distant histories as well as with the established scenic traditions, made increasingly attractive in their placement within the majestic setting, while on the other hand, the area witnessed continuing rural difficulties in the forms of sustained population and subsistence crises, like the onset of potato blight, as discussed at the beginning of the chapter. The persistent presence of this double role of the landscape, and its expression in the works and writings of artists, writers, and tourists who followed those of the decades around the turn of the century, serves to illuminate more fully the context for early- to mid-century

landscape paintings and to illustrate the ultimate ability of these works to bridge the gap between the two perceptions of the Highland landscape during the Clearance era.

As many other historians and art historians have already shown, the presence of the Queen within the Highland landscape enabled the production of an ever-expanding body of visual references to the role of the land as a setting for historical associations and landscape mythology.[143] According to Pringle, the painted works of Sir Edwin Landseer, most particularly, signified the royal appropriation of Highland landscape and history in the artist's depictions of the natural presence of the royal family and their subsequent subjugation of landscape and animal life through sporting activities and the visual denial of current social conditions in the Highlands (Cosgrove/Daniels 149-153). While Pringle argues that this effect and the myth it engendered were not the products of conscious effort on the part of either Landseer or the Queen, he nevertheless describes the resulting geographical perspective as one that reduces the landscape from "a romantic construction to a bland container for what is ultimately a socially and historically determined myth" (147). In accordance with Pringle's view, T.C. Smout offers further insight into the duality of Highland identity in his essay accompanying the recent exhibition and catalogue of Landseer's works at the Royal Scottish Academy, writing, "To consider the Highlands without its problems was not so much wilful fantasy on the part of Landseer and McCulloch as selective vision, much like today considering Africa as a destination for wildlife tours and not dwelling on its disease and poverty" (Smout 2005 13).[144] From this perspective, then, the presence of Victoria in the Highlands, and the subsequent sustainment of interest it produced in the area, nurtured the already-established

[143] See Pringle's essay in Cosgrove/Daniels as well as relevant chapters in Morrison and Holloway/Errington.

[144] See also Cannizzo for additional images surrounding Victoria and Albert's sojourns in the Highlands as well as Ormond 2005 (120-122).

disconnected perspective that illumined the Highlands as the setting for tourism and, on a different plane, as the setting for sustained rural distress. Pringle's argument is useful in another sense, as well, as it provides a possible framework for the discussion of paintings as exemplifiers of landscape myths and perspectives during the nineteenth century. He not only employs Landseer's depictions of Highland lifestyle and wildlife to show the conceptual effects of Victoria's presence in the Highlands, but also cites the details not depicted by the artist, such as rural poverty and changing cultural practises, as illustrative of the context and function of the works within the burgeoning Highland myths of the times.

In this respect, Pringle builds on the fundamentals of the approach and argument employed by John Barrell in *The Dark Side of the Landscape*, a watershed study that, while not directly related to this thesis in subject matter, provides relevant techniques for the investigation of landscape and environmental perspectives within paintings. Throughout Barrell's discussion of the depiction of landscape and the rural poor in the turn of the century (c. 1730-1840) works of Thomas Gainsborough, George Morland, and John Constable, the tension between the rapid transformation of ways of life in the countryside, which involved changes in land holding, land use, and agriculture, and the seeming scarcity of such topics and the effects wrought upon both landscape and labourer in the rural paintings of the time form the central enquiry of the work. Barrell discusses simultaneously the agricultural developments of the era and the concurrent trends in art that determined or guided the depiction of rural places and people within contemporary paintings. In attempting to extract and reconcile the duality of vision that these contrasting strains of development represent, he writes, "For the most part the art of rural life offers us the image of a stable, unified, almost egalitarian society; so that my concern in this book is to suggest that it is possible to

look beneath the surface of the painting, and to discover there evidence of the very conflict it seems to deny" (5). The bulk of Barrell's subsequent study rests upon this premise and provides readers with an inversion of investigative techniques that attempts to extract meaning about the artistic and literary contexts of the pertinent works from analysis of the elision of contemporaneous countryside change within the paintings. In this way, Barrell's work also offers an invaluable framework for the exploration of Clearance-era landscapes, which likewise seem superficially to ignore existing trends in rural life while also tapping into the artistic conventions and landscape perspectives of the times.[145] As I intend to show, however, many artists, writers, and observers rather more covertly included the effects of the Clearances within their landscape paintings by illuminating the alterations in land use, agriculture, and appearance of the Highlands and often by showing that landscape as devoid of human habitation, again a popular characteristic in the landscape culture of the times. Like Barrell, then, the landscape paintings relevant to this study will be examined more extensively for what they do not depict (active human populations, for example) and for what they quietly depict as natural elements of Highland scenery (such as the ubiquitous sheep or deer) rather than for what they overtly proclaim about the majesty or storminess of the area. Instead of pursuing insight into the landscape details of increasing industrialisation and concentrated use of rural lands, as is the goal of Barrell's work and the works of other art historians, this study involves a near reversal of the lines of enquiry as it attempts to demonstrate the disappearance of human presence within the landscape (though this, of course, was equally a product of expanding economies and the resulting efforts to increase the efficiency and return of rural lands). The landscape paintings discussed below illustrate the firm link between

[145] For other related studies that employ an environmental history of art in a variety of contexts and setting, both historical and art historical and in the United States and Europe, see Novak, Marx, Cosgrove 1998, and Bermingham.

the events of the Clearances and the expression of such developments within Highland environment and in this portrayal, however understated or tied to concurrent perceptions of the landscape as a setting free of destitution, the works exhibit the pervasive landscape legacies of the depopulation and changing estate economies of the era.

Landscape Paintings

As one of the earliest and best-travelled artists to traverse large areas of the Scottish countryside in the 1740s, painter and landscape draughtsman Paul Sandby (1725-1809) provided audiences with some of the earliest images of the Highlands through prints and books, beginning in 1778, which are also remarkable for their display of Sandby's precise topographical technique alongside his palpable artistic and scenic interest in the landscape. These views offer valuable insight into the appearance and portrayal of the Highland landscape before the wide-ranging effects of the Clearances appeared within the environment in the latter decades of the eighteenth century and provide an informative vantage point from which to investigate later landscapes. Sandby's travels in Scotland were undertaken through his involvement with the Ordnance Survey of Scotland, for which he served as official draughtsman and which stemmed from the increasing anxiety on the part of the British government to bring Scotland, and more particularly the Highlands, under more visible control following the Battle of Culloden (Holloway/Errington 33, Faigan ix). This process necessarily involved the creation of detailed maps, the improvement of roads and other channels of communication, and the reinforcement of garrisons, actions that reflected an increasing appropriation of the Highland landscape through both physical occupation and topographical delineation. While Sandby produced accurately detailed plans and maps for the survey, including views of Castle Duart on

the Isle of Mull, he also created many looser landscape views that evince a more relaxed style alongside impeccable compositional and observational qualities. These works, such as the 1747 pen and wash sketch depicting the landscape of Strathtay (plate 68), demonstrate Sandby's keen topographical sense and show the surrounding southern Highland landscape to be one of gentle rolling hills full of the evidence of human habitation and cultivation (Holloway/Errington 37-39). At this point in the mid-eighteenth century, the environs of Strathtay and the rest of Perthshire were not yet affected by the impending sheep clearances that would pervade the area around and after 1770, marking the initial frontier of sheep farming as it progressed north- and westwards (Richards 2000 68-69, 75, 77). Clearly, the landscape offered by Sandby possesses none of the dramatic elements of Highland scenery that became increasingly popular toward the close of the century and instead shows the cultivated and inhabited character of the locale. Holloway and Errington make an instructive comparison of this work by Sandby to a later landscape of the same area in 1780 (plate 69), which explicitly shows an interest in the more severe mountainous aspects of Highland scenery, however modified to fit the artist's purpose within the picturesque landscape conventions of the times (Holloway/Errington 37-39). Furthermore, though humans still maintain a presence in the scene, through the artist's representations of tiny dwellings and a tartan-clad Highlander, the later work portentously shows that the sheep have already worked their way into the landscape. These animals carry significance not only as by-products of the concurrently expanding sheep frontier and attending Clearances, but also as key landscape elements that help the artist to denote and accentuate the picturesque aspects of increasingly appreciated Highland scenery.

Although the landscape paintings that appeared in the decades following the

early travels and artistic ventures of Sandby offer instrumental insight into the application of picturesque theories to the Highlands and the later development of Highlandism, with its implications for both scenery and national identity, the landscapes of the mid-nineteenth century provide the most visible support for the appearance of Clearance-induced change within the Highland environment. As clarified above, this chapter will not delve into discussions or accounts of the development of picturesque theory or the subsequent rise of Highland imagery as a general marker of Scottish identity since these aspects of visual and cultural history occupy central places within the course of Scottish history and art history and have, consequently, received considerable investigation, analysis, and discussion elsewhere.[146] While artists increasingly turned their attention to the northern and western Highlands after about 1830, when romantic Highlandism fully expanded to include the arts, according to Morrison, the landscape that emerged provided a vastly altered conception of the Highlands, not only in terms of geography as artists worked their way into the more remote regions of the northwest, but also in terms of the growing preference for deserted and often menacing environments rife with signs of drastic environmental change in the absence of people and the growing presence of sheep and other indicators of Clearance-era events (2003 92-110). Take, for example, the 1840 painting Head of Loch Eil (plate 70) by Oban-born artist Macneill Macleay (c. 1806-c. 1878), a work that was likely exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in 1839 and, one year later, at the Royal Scottish Academy as well (Smith/Skipwith 43). In the painting, Macleay portrays the rugged, and rather unattainable, mountainous landscape surrounding Loch Eil as it spreads beneath an uncertain sky,

[146] See Morrison and Holloway/Errington for detailed discussions of the picturesque in Scottish scenery painting and for the rise of romantic Highlandism. Andrews, Hemingway, Copley/Garside, and Bermingham (and many others like Barrell and Cosgrove) offer extensive analysis of the picturesque within the larger context of British painting.

full of squall and showers as well as breaks in the clouds that allow sunlight to filter through the rain. The inaccessibility of Macleay's landscape, while partially mitigated by the streaming sunlight, receives further enhancement through the dark, overspreading foreground shadows as well as by the rushing, rocky stream, which successfully limits the accessible space within the work to the small corner of the foreground occupied by a group of wealthy picnicking hunters and their dog. The sheer absence of any other human habitation in the landscape, save for the seemingly derelict dwelling and tiny smoky fire, perhaps a product of the hunters' passage across the plain, in the distant and inaccessible background, not only attests to the increasing artistic appreciation of "Highland wildernesses," but also illustrates the expanding effects of the Clearances within the landscape. While there are no sheep visible in this particular example, the presence of the men with their hunting paraphernalia and expansive, almost proprietary, gestures illustrates the growing use of the Highlands as a hunting ground for wealthy new landowners and other well-off sportsmen.[147] Furthermore, Macleay's pointed illumination of the deserted, and nearly ruined, dwelling in the distance calls attention to the sheer desertion of the remainder of the landscape and the resulting identity of the place as canvas for sporting activities and for the experience of tumultuous weather and other meteorological effects. Such juxtaposition, of empty house positioned directly above the wealthy visitors and their hunting equipment, reinforces the dual identity shouldered by the Highlands during the Clearance era as the empty landscape garnered increasing praise and justification as a result of its shifting settlement patterns and consequently expanding ability to showcase the effects of wild weather and wildlife.

Macleay's painting reflects, however unintentionally, these changes in the

[147] The hunting and sporting aspects of the Highlands, and the subsequent representation of these subjects in painting, will be discussed in more detail below.

land, which grew directly from the alterations in tenancy and land holding that affected the area around Loch Eil and the estates of Lochaber in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The path of large-scale sheep farming had spread into the Great Glen by the turn of the century and the lure of profits alongside the decreased demands for estate management that arrived with it prompted many area landlords to undertake schemes for resettling tenants on crofts to make way for the swelling tide of sheep and the high rents offered by grazers. During the first few years of the nineteenth century, tenants on the estate of Cameron of Locheil were removed and resettled on crofts along the shores of Loch Eil (Hunter 2000 65). It is likely that fear of removal or resettlement prompted many local tenants to emigrate in 1802 or 1803, but by 1804 the results of estate reorganisation were visible within the landscape of Lochaber, as noted in a letter describing the changes in the Locheil estate:

> Everything is turned upside down since you left Lochaber, and the remainder of the unfortunate people you see emigrating, or at least as many of them as have the means in their power. Families who had not been disturbed for 4 or 500 years are turned out of house and their possessions given to the highest bidders. So much for Highland attachment between Chief and clans. But my own opinion is that the great gentlemen alluded to [the landlords] are doing a general good without any intention of doing so, by driving those people to desperation and forcing them to quit their country. (Richards 2000 115)

Personal opinions about the efficacy of Clearance and emigration aside, this excerpt provides a first-hand account of the changes wrought upon the Lochaber estates, which included Loch Eil. The massive resettlements, removals, and emigrations that swept the area during the turn of the century undoubtedly left the landscape in a changed state, as it progressed from an area of communal holdings to a vast sheep walk punctuated by crofting settlements. Macleay's painting likewise records this

change in its portrayal of an unpopulated landscape, increasingly valued for its offer of wild scenery and game in lieu of its erstwhile inhabitants. While the precise geographic location depicted in the work cannot, at this time, be shown to have sustained an actual removal of tenants, the area encompassing Macleay's site was certainly affected by the evictions and resettlements pursued by the area's landlords during the events mentioned above. The subsequent changes in land use and settlement altered the appearance of the land as well as the way in which it was employed and viewed by outside sportsmen and artists, as Macleay's stylistic and subject decisions attest. The elite hunters, therefore, are noteworthy in their representation of this changing use of the land, as shifting settlement patterns allowed greater utilisation of Highland locales for the production of sheep and, later, game animals. Their appearance and role in the painting alludes vividly to the changing rural landscape that characterised the Highlands, and, more specifically, this area of the Lochaber estates, during the Clearance era.

A slightly later example of a Highland landscape, the 1868 work Moorland Near Kinlochewe, Ross-shire (plate 71) by Arthur Perigal (1816-1884), presents similar inclusions of the landscape alterations that stemmed from the developments of the Clearance era. The work, which was Perigal's diploma picture at the Royal Scottish Academy, depicts a vast Highland landscape, with a wide, flat foreground backed by sharply modelled and highly conventional green and grey mountains. A blue sky filled with puffy cumulous clouds overarches the detailed foreground, which includes a path, evidence of a slightly more generous degree of accessibility than offered in the Macleay landscape, as well as a number of cattle and sheep and an assortment of rocks and boulders that cut through the thin layer of turf. While the scene clearly includes evidence of human habitation, visible in the figure and wagon

and in the distant signs of smoke and surrounding village, the work nevertheless hints at the alterations in land holding and land use occasioned by the economic and social conditions of the Clearance era in a way that highlights the resulting amenability of the physical environment to landscape painting. Perigal's celebration of the most renowned aspects of Highland scenery, such as his sharply delineated mountains and isolated glen populated by a few animals and even fewer humans, is clearly a product of the decades-old sustainment of interest in Scottish scenery as it conformed to the ideals of landscape treatises, travel guides, and fiction, all of which expressly relied upon the spreading depopulation and increasing "wildness" of the area, qualities that the economic and social changes of the Clearance era induced within the landscape. In fact, while describing another landscape by Perigal, Morrison writes that such mid-century (and later) Highland landscape works, which are still highly visible and obtainable in international museums and galleries, "unconsciously celebrate the destruction of the culture and landscape they outwardly endorse" (Morrison 2003 109-110). Indeed, this area of Wester Ross, where Perigal gained much inspiration for his landscapes in conjunction with other Highland locales extending as far north as Sutherland, had again witnessed tenant removals, resettlements, and emigration as landlords shifted estate populations toward coastal crofting settlement, where land was marginally productive and newly arrived tenants were expected to subsist on income gleaned from kelp harvesting and fishing. In later years, during the 1840s, the region was hard hit by the effects of the potato blight and was the setting, like many other parts of the Highlands, for severe hardship and destitution (Hunter 2000 64-66, 80-82, 110-114). While Perigal's work does not depict the actual events of resettlement and famine that occurred in Ross-shire throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century, his painting, in its portrayal

of the Highland mountains and landscape sparsely populated with humans and serving as the grazing grounds for cattle and, more significantly, sheep, nevertheless illustrates the profound changes that altered the appearance and use of that surrounding landscape as it merged with the artistic sensibilities and conventions of the era. Like the Macleay work above, the precise location of Perigal's work cannot yet be shown to have witnessed such events, but his scenic interest in the area and ways of depicting the landscape exemplify the merging of artistic preference and latent landscape history of the Clearance era.

Only two years prior to Perigal's Moorland Near Kinlochewe, Ross-shire, Peter Graham (1836-1921) produced his successful landscape, A Spate in the Highlands (1866, plate 72), which, although not a depiction of a specific Highland locale, continues the expression of the trends illuminated in earlier works by portraying the area as an increasingly uninhabited landscape.[148] Graham's painting depicts a swiftly rushing river, which moves rapidly past the boulders and tree limbs that stand in its course, amidst dark clouds and rocky slopes while an excessively black cloud threatens to block the few weak rays of sunlight in the background. On the whole, the work possesses neither human presence nor hints of a coming calm, qualities that further accentuate its perspective on elemental Highland nature. Despite Graham's limited renown at the time of this painting's creation, the atmosphere and drama of the work drew the attention and acclaim of attendees of the 1866 Royal Academy exhibition. The *Art-Journal* wrote that A Spate in the Highlands had been "greeted by deserved applause" and that its depictions of natural violence "evince a bold hand and an eye vigilant to mark nature's grand phenomenon" (1866 170). The depiction of stormy nature was an emerging tendency in later Victorian landscape

[148] Graham painted a second version of this popular work in 1868. It is now at the Aberdeen Art Gallery.

painting and the *Art-Journal*, in the same article, acclaimed these developments, writing: "Let our landscape-painters, by all means, continue to give literal transcriptions of facts: the more truth we get the better...To the dry bones, sinews, and anatomy of nature, let there be added life and expression" (1866 170). Clearly, while the conventions of Victorian landscape painting were turning towards an appreciation of the forceful aspects of nature, Scottish artists painting in the Highlands illustrated the landscape as one of intense natural struggle. While certainly not depicting the Clearances *per se*, Graham, in A Spate in the Highlands, provided a vision of the area that illuminated the harshness of the Highland landscape and that also characterised it as a setting of great turmoil and struggle. The powerful character of his landscape and its lack of human influence perhaps allude to the processes of upheaval and depopulation that occurred throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. An additional work by Graham further confirms his perception of the deserted and nearly uninhabitable character of the Highlands and also illustrates the larger association of the northern landscape to its past, a quality that becomes particularly informative when that past is clearly linked to the demographic and agricultural changes of the Clearances. This work, Ruins of Other Times (plate 73), portrays an unmistakably bleak Highland landscape, filled not only with characteristic mountains and mist, but also with skeletal, withered tree trunks and a foreground of useless marshy fens. A solitary raven perches atop a dead branch and, with its connotations of death, emphasises the desolation and barrenness of the scene. The deadened environment and the title of the painting attest to Graham's evocation of the after-effects of history within the landscape and the sheer emptiness of the work conveys a resonant image of the legacy of past inhabitants.

It is this aspect of Peter Graham's works to which Blackie refers in his 1872

volume of Highland poetry which is quoted at the beginning of this thesis. Blackie's notice of the dark peaks, "mountain expeditions," and other scenes of wilderness that often form a backdrop for the landscape paintings of artists like Graham and MacWhirter, among others, vividly illustrates the ongoing artistic preference for unpopulated, "wild" places, particularly those found in the Highlands. In contrast to Blackie's later description of the deserted dwellings of Braemar, which evince his knowledge of Clearance history, this linking between wild, empty landscapes and contemporary trends in painting illuminates a rift in perceptions of the Highlands during the second half of the nineteenth-century. Instead of Daniell's populated, working Highland landscapes from earlier decades, these later images by Graham, Perigal, and Macleay reflect ongoing stylistic landscape trends as nineteenth-century taste converged with the environmental history of the Clearance era. This preference for deserted landscapes expanded at a time when settlement and labour patterns were changing as a result of the Clearances and, while these works do not depict deserted dwellings or expanding sheep farms, they are valuable signifiers of changing landscape observation and use, much like Blackie's comments and his dual perception of Highland landscapes. Works like the Macleay and Perigal discussed above express a differently used landscape, that of artists and sportsmen, and their elision of human habitation, or even ruined houses, is illustrative of the Clearance-induced changes inherent in the land and the contemporary focus on the "authentically" wild landscapes that writers, tourists, and artists preferred.

Paintings of Sheep and Deer

The great number of Highland landscapes that communicate or accentuate the emptiness of the "wilderness" and the seemingly natural omnipresence of sheep permits these conventions a highly visible and abundant place within the course of

Scottish art history that necessarily limits their discussion in this chapter. By taking a quick rifle through current and past catalogues of Scottish art at auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's, the prevalence of sheep and cattle imagery in nineteenth-century painting becomes noticeably apparent as the sales frequently bristle with rural livestock images that do not often figure into studies of the major works and accomplishments of Scottish painting. A short mention of a few late nineteenth-century examples by Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935) will suffice further to solidify not only the pervasive nature of sheep subjects in Victorian paintings of Scotland (and, indeed, the works of today as well) but also the ongoing link these works represent to the after-effects of the Clearances. Farquharson's affinity for the depiction of sheep within the Highland landscape is well known and he maintained a prolific presence in the production of such paintings, which illustrate not only the results of shifting economic conditions in the Highlands during the early decades of the nineteenth century, but also the change in habitation in the Highlands as sheep grew more numerous. Even Alexander Smith, in his influential 1851 travelogue, noted the picturesque qualities of sheep farming, writing: "I think a multitude of sheep descending a hillside, now outspreading...now huddling...one of the prettiest sights in the world" (A. Smith 150). In a more contemporary observation, John McGrath's 1974 play, *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil*, employs sheep as indicators of changing economies and, consequently, as the primary force behind many landlords' displacement of tenants from the first scene onwards, evidence of the currency of the sheep as a symbol of the Clearances and changing land use patterns of the nineteenth century.[149] Despite the picturesque observations of Smith and the

[149] McGrath's specific citation of the Cheviot sheep is itself highly symbolic of Clearance as this new breed was introduced to the Highlands in the 1790s as a more profitable successor to both native sheep and the previously introduced Blackface flocks. Cheviots garnered praise for their ideal combination of fine wool and large carcasses (Richards 2000 72, 78-83).

contrastingly political views expressed in McGrath's play, Farquharson's 1883 work The Joyless Winter Day (plate 74) depicts a herd of sheep making their way through a roiling Highland snowstorm in a way that emphasises the Highland landscape, and the sheep's place within it. The presence of the sheep in such a harsh environment accentuates the trends hinted at in Graham's painting of the river in spate, namely, that the Highland environment is one of rugged and powerful natural forces. Farquharson's usage of sheep as the main figural focus of the work also makes an indirect link to the Clearances, as the expansion of sheep farming was a primary force in the movement of tenants first to coastal areas and then to North America and Australia.[150] A later work by Farquharson, The Sun Peeped O'er Yon Southland Hills (plate 75) of 1908, more vividly establishes the depopulated character of the Highlands, as the sheep in this painting are tiny inhabitants of an otherwise deserted snowy landscape. The wide expanse of empty hills and the forlorn efforts of the sheep to survive in such conditions continue to accentuate the changes wrought in the landscape during the Clearance era as the sheep have become the primary occupants of an area that is clearly characterised as a most difficult living environment for any inhabitant.

Horatio McCulloch's Glencoe of 1864 (plate 76), perhaps the best-known Highland landscape of the era, also provides clues to the changing use of the landscape and its subsequent inclusion in painted representations of the area by demonstrating the growing prevalence of deer within the Highlands, already expressed in the work by Macleay. McCulloch's work portrays the well-known scenery and surrounding mountains of Glencoe, itself already a frequent stop on the

[150] Morrison discusses the role of perpetually snowbound sheep in Farquharson's works and points out that the "inability of his subjects to thrive in poor weather was precisely the reason why so many people had to be forcibly removed from their homes and pressed into a new type of existence," thereby linking the expansion of sheep farming and the Clearances to the painted landscape (2005 104). He also defines the differing breeds of sheep (2005 103-104).

tourist route through the Highlands and, as mentioned above, full of rich historical and landscape associations, in a way that accentuates both the uninhabited nature of the scene as well as the conventional elements of Highland landscape. These "most savage and utterly desolate" glens, the "iron-like ridges of eternal rock," and the "gloomy naked hill" pictured within the painting correspond precisely to contemporary praises of the most recognisable aspects of Highland scenery and McCulloch's inclusion of the deer in the foreground further enhances the deserted atmosphere of the locale (ILN 1847 vol. 2, 160). Deer, although native to the area, represent an ongoing mid-century trend toward the increasing use of Highland estates as sport grounds and deer parks for wealthy stalkers that paralleled and grew from the slightly earlier reorganisation of estate lands to accommodate growing numbers of sheep. Deer parks were equally favoured as efficient and popular uses of the lands, particularly after the lust for the high profits of sheep farming had cooled by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and also frequently required the removal and resettlement of tenants to make way for the newly implanted herds of game deer.[151] Orr reports that the Highlands harboured 28 deer forests in 1839, a count that grew to 65 by 1870 and again swelled to well over 100 by the 1880s and '90s (33, 35, 46). Morrison also notes the portentous appearance of deer within painted Highland landscapes, pointing out that these references to the sporting use of the land again correspond and allude to the major alterations in land use and appearance that occurred throughout the Clearance era as well as to the contradiction inherent in the portrayal of such "natural" landscapes and the unnatural reality of the way in which this landscape evolved (Morrison 2003 109-110). He further observes that the deer in Glencoe help McCulloch to allude "to the Highlands as a place of wilderness,

[151] See Orr for an in-depth exploration of the expansion of deer parks in the Highlands during the second half of the nineteenth century. Gaskell also offers an account of the growth of the sport industry in Morvern.

'unspoilt' by human impact...It ignores and dismisses the people who lived on and worked the land," a point that reinforces the symbolic function of the animal in illustrating both the conceptual conventions involved in the portrayal of the Highland landscape as well as the physical changes that the Clearance era brought to the land (Morrison 2005 106).

Sir Edwin Landseer's The Monarch of the Glen of 1851 (plate 77) offers another strikingly apparent reference to the subjugation of the Highland landscape by the expanding elite interest in deer parks and stalking and continues to maintain a highly visible place within the popular visual culture of the Highlands today.[152] The work's recent headlining inclusion in the National Galleries of Scotland's eponymous exhibition attests to its sustained popularity and currency as a symbol of Highland wilderness and a potent reminder of the area's popularity with tourists, as the wall text alongside the picture volubly described:

> The powerful sense of untamed freedom in the magnificent stag, the communion with nature at its most sublime and the exhilaration experienced in wild and solitary places—all those things which draw visitors to the Highlands—are here enshrined in a single monumental and iconic image.[153]

As the label asserts in somewhat ridiculous prose, the imperial stag standing majestically in front of unmistakably rugged Highland mountains remains the primary vehicle of expression for the "wild and solitary" nature of Highland life and scenery. In this respect, and in its sheer popularity and frequently careless reproduction, The Monarch of the Glen occupies similar territory as The Last of the Clan as one of the

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[152] The Monarch of the Glen is ubiquitous, even within contemporary visual and tourist culture. It is a common illustration of the wildlife and wilderness of the Highlands and has also inspired the name of a popular BBC series set on a Highland estate.

[153] In his catalogue for the exhibition, Ormond notes that "the image of The Monarch of the Glen is so iconic that it is difficult to look at the painting with a fresh eye" (2005 115), attesting again to the prevalence of the painting.

most easily recognised and increasingly clichéd paintings of the Highlands. Despite these contemporary shortcomings, however, the work nevertheless suggests not only the growing presence of the royal family in the area through its use of the label "monarch," but also the role of the deer, as a popular target for elite hunting enthusiasts, in drawing larger numbers of Englishmen and Lowland Scots to the area for sport. Several of Landseer's other works, among them Highlanders Returning from Deerstalking (1827, plate 78) and Return from the Staghunt (1837, plate 79), attest to this career-long interest in the depiction of the Highland landscape alongside its sporting uses for royalty and other elite.[154] The increasing popularity of these activities, including deer stalking and grouse hunting, was noted by the Inverness Courier at least as early as 1843 (Barron 32) and, in 1862, P.G. Hamerton observed that the connection between tenant evictions and grouse hunting was one that had profoundly altered the appearance and use of the landscape (63).[155] As with sheep farming, this use of the land also altered the texture of population and land use of the Highlands, thereby contributing to the ongoing depopulation of the area.

As mentioned above in the preceding discussion of landscapes by Macleay and McCulloch, the presence of deer within the landscape continued to allude to environmental changes throughout the nineteenth century, a trend that worked its way into numerous landscape paintings of the era, including works by William Beattie Brown (1831-1909), Carl Suhrlandt (1828-1919), and Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), among legions of other artists working in the Highlands. Brown's 1883-84 diploma

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[154] See also Errington 1977 for an essay regarding Landseer's Death of the Stag in Glen Tilt (1824-30) and other paintings of deer stalking in the Highlands. She notes Landseer's later propensity for the depiction of uninhabited landscapes in works like Monarch of the Glen, which portray animals within the pervasive image of the unpopulated Highlands (208). Ormond 2005 also discusses these works (41-56). Death of the Stag was reproduced in the 1876 edition of the *Art-Journal* (60), evidence of its continuing currency as an image of a popular sport.

[155] In fact, the development of deer stalking as a genre of landscape use and a widely-available Highland "product" emerged with the 1838 publication of William Scrope's *The Art of Deerstalking*, a work that initiated the long-lasting and appealing image of Highland sport (Gold 110). The subject also received considerable cartoon coverage in magazines like *Punch*.

painting at the Royal Scottish Academy, Coire-na-Faireamh (Applecross Deer Forest, Ross-shire) (plate 80), depicts a solitary stag in the midst of a typical twilit Highland landscape, which includes surrounding craggy mountains, calm reflective loch waters, and a total absence of signs of human habitation. Brown frequently painted throughout the Highlands, often spending at least three months per year painting the scenery of Sutherland, Ross-shire, Glencoe and other locales with the aid of a tent to provide shelter from the elements (*The Scotsman*, 1 April 1909). His work received extensive praise for its popular and accessible depictions of Highland scenery and a short descriptive text conveyed these landscape elements in Coire-na-Faireamh to readers of the 1901 illustrated catalogue of the National Gallery of Scotland:

> Across a stretch of rock and heather and rough grass, where a stag stands on the edge of the moorland pool which occupies the right foreground, one looks towards a sheet of water which catches the light of the sky. It lies at the foot of dark and steep mountains, which, piled up to right and left, fall towards the centre of the picture, where they show the opening of a gorge, and reveal through a rift in the clouds a space of clear sky coloured by sunset. (Gibb 1901)

The presence of the stag alongside the clear reference to the deer forest in the title indisputably links Brown's landscape to the changed conditions brought into the area during the shifting economies and estate plans of the early- to mid-nineteenth century. The sheer contrast between the lack of population and the place name of the setting, which is always also translated into the English version "a high place where watch was kept" in the notes and publications of the painting, sharply highlights the past presence of Gaelic communities in the area, a contrast made increasingly evident through Brown's portrayal of the changed conditions and inhabitants that occupy the place at the time of his painting. Indeed, Applecross, which lies across the sound from Raasay on the northwest coast, witnessed massive population growth alongside

increasing rent and pressures on available resources and avenues of income, trends common throughout the Highland during the Clearance era which frequently fed schemes of emigration and estate reorganisation during the first half of the nineteenth century (Richards 2000 46, 286; Hunter 2000 59). The land, as evidenced by Brown's painting, eventually became the site for a deer forest and Brown's depiction of the area and tacit acknowledgement of the necessary resettlement and population shift required for such an alteration in land use illustrate the persistent presence of these trends within both the physical landscape of the Highlands and the paintings of the area.

Two further examples of hunting scenes more vividly portray the actions involved in Highland sport within particular locales, a specificity that illuminates the ongoing association between landscape and the shifting economies of land use that determined the appearance and use of the Highlands during the nineteenth century.[156] German-born artist Carl Suhrlandt, who worked extensively in the British Isles, depicted such sporting use of the landscape in his 1889 work, A Day's Grouse Shooting on the Glentanar Estate (plate 82).[157] This painting, while certainly not strictly a landscape image of the north, nevertheless illustrates the changing uses of the lands that occurred during the Clearances and that continued to affect the ways in which that landscape appeared in artistic output. The gentlemen hunters and their dogs have come to the Glentanar estate, which was cleared in 1855-58 in favour of deer, an action that displaced tenants to other areas of the estate, to pursue their

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[156] Although not as prevalent as shooting, sport fishing also occupied a place in the spectrum of Highland land use during, and after, the Clearance era. See, for example, David Farquharson's 1879-85 work, The End of the Day's Fishing (plate 81), which similarly employs conventional Highland imagery, such as deserted glens and foreboding mountains, as an expansive backdrop for elite sport.

[157] For another example of a foreign artist travelling and working in the Highlands, see the work of well-known Norwegian artist Hans Fredrik Gude (1825-1903), who visited the area in 1877 and painted Oban Bay in 1889 (plate 83). The work displays Gude's highly detailed and meticulous observation of the west coast landscape as well as the texture of fishing and settlement activities in the area (Haverkamp/Lange 54-55, 174-175).

hunting endeavours (Richards 2000 289; Orr 6). The tenants who were resettled or removed from estate lands in order to create space for the more profitable hunting enterprises left an increasingly uninhabited landscape, clearly portrayed by Suhrlandt in the background of the hunting scene, that could be used by wealthy hunters and other sportsmen. Consequently, Suhrlandt's image of grouse hunting reflects the persistent results of the Clearances upon the Highland landscape and also illuminates the social interactions, equipment, and activities that characterise the hunting party. His overlaying of these actions and characters on a decidedly unpopulated and bleak Highland background clearly attests to the appropriation of the Glentanar Estate by wealthy sportsmen and other landowners. Gourlay Steell's painting Deerstalking on Jura (1875, plate 84) likewise offers a glimpse of the characters and actions involved in the sporting activities popular in the Highlands from the mid-nineteenth century. The reviewer from the *Art-Journal* explicitly noted the people and actions involved in the work, writing that "the moment chosen is when the noble stag has just fallen in the presence of R.D. Campbell and his favourite stalker, gillies, dogs, etc" (1875 154). The collected hunting party, clearly under the leadership of a well-known figure, with their Highland guide and their dog, pony, and stag maintain a primary place within the landscape, which is nevertheless unmistakably Highland in appearance and mood, and seemingly assert their dominance over both landscape and Highlander through gesture and expression. Steell's depiction of the sportsmen within a landscape specifically labelled as that of Jura and the clearing and resettlement which undoubtedly occurred on the island to enable such a scene underline once again the continued appearance of Clearance-induced trends in landscape use and environmental change within Victorian painting.

In conclusion, the Highland landscape paintings of the late-eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries highlight the increasing changes within the use and perception of the northern landscape that stemmed from the concurrent alterations in land use and settlement of the Clearance era. Until now, the relevant works discussed in this chapter have been largely ignored within the context of this changing landscape, a surprising and significant omission in the art historical literature given the predominance of the Highlands as a landscape subject for artists and writers throughout the Victorian era, and earlier, and the undeniable linkage between the population movements and land use alterations central to the period of the Clearances. Although many mid-century news sources viewed the elites' use of the landscape as completely separate from the concurrent famine, emigration, and resettlement events, these two spheres merged in the Highland landscape paintings from mid-century onwards. Nineteenth-century writers like Alexander Smith and P.G. Hamerton as well as observers like Thomas Telford provided insight into the changes within the landscape wrought by the depopulation and shifting economies of the times and their writings parallel the varied perspectives of modern historians and geographers who likewise recognise the legacy of the Clearances within the Highland landscape. Similarly, artists of this era, including William Beattie Brown, Peter Graham, and even Horatio McCulloch created works that contain quiet references to the effects of Clearance on the perception of the Highlands as the northern landscape came to reflect the departure of human populations as well as the emerging economic interests in both sheep farming and deer stalking.

Chapter VII
Conclusion

The longevity of the subject of the Clearances in historical literature and the popular imagination illustrates the far-reaching effects of the topic in contemporary understandings of Highland demographic history and reinforces the ongoing frequency with which the Clearances are drawn into twenty-first-century discussions regarding the scope and effects of this aspect of Scottish history. Indeed, as discussed in chapter two, the subject has received considerable attention in modern historical researches and has subsequently fed numerous long-smouldering debates surrounding the nature of Clearance-era emigration, the role of market forces, and the degree of landlord culpability, among many other areas of disagreement. These debates continue to rage in academic circles, while the widespread mainstream perception remains one which perpetuates the common conflation of Clearance with emigration, at the expense of the lesser-known but equally formative trends of rural change which have been discussed throughout the course of the thesis. It was, therefore, a frequent occurrence to encounter these strands of Clearance disagreement in the expectations and opinions expressed by interested individuals while undertaking the research for this thesis. Many of these people voiced similar views and preconceptions regarding the scope of the project, its applicability to the ongoing debate surrounding the Clearances, and the role of popular perceptions of the era. For example, some wondered if there were any paintings, beyond The Last of the Clan, that related to the Clearances and who might have painted these works, while others immediately asked if the paintings depicted the miserable episodes of eviction that are so frequently associated with the mainstream view of the era. Their responses, as I briefly explained the intent behind the thesis, enumerated the variety of relevant paintings, and emphasised that the topic of emigration received gentle treatment in paintings,

while the subject of eviction virtually none, showed not only that a topic centring on the Clearances still elicits strong opinions about Highland history, but also that there was ample scope for the continued redressing of misconceptions about the era. It became clear that the painted images themselves presented the most effective way to express and reconcile these differences.

As illustrated over the course of the thesis, the collected works convey the preconceptions inherent in outsiders' views of Clearance history as well as the strands of social, economic, and environmental change that constitute the wider picture of the era. The significance of these forces as indicators of Clearance-induced change within painting relies as much upon the scope of effects reflected in the works as upon the subjects and scenes that are avoided. The assembled images, while not displaying overtly political messages about the condition of the Highlanders or the painful episodes of eviction that are regularly associated with the emotive subject of the Clearances, nevertheless illuminate the legacy of Clearance-era demographic and economic changes as forces instrumental in shaping the appearance, use, and perception of the northern landscape. For example, although many paintings of Highland emigration have, in the past, received little academic notice due to the works' perceived sentimentality, this thesis demonstrates that such paintings possess specifically Highland meanings and conventions that heighten their import as images of the Clearances. Works portraying the rural labour of the Highlands certainly fit within the larger scheme of Victorian interest in the subject, but also retain a significance in subject matter that relates directly to the changes in rural lifeways occasioned by the events of the Clearance era. Finally, the sheer number of nineteenth-century Highland landscape paintings often undermines the consequence accorded them by art historians, but the works clearly offer insight into the shifting

trends of landscape appreciation and the concurrent changes in land use and appearance effected during the Clearance era.

In recognising the far wider pressures exerted by the social and demographic changes created during the Clearance era, this thesis extends the current historical understanding of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Highland history and expands on the emerging investigation of the role of landscape and history within the course of art history in Scotland. This line of enquiry engages with the history of nineteenth-century Scottish painting and contributes to the expanding academic investigation of Scottish art in a way that narrows the gap between modern interpretations of labour and landscape in Scottish painting and the related studies of English landscape that appeared throughout the past two decades. The centrality afforded to the relevant works imparts greater legitimacy to the individual paintings discussed by recognising the works' place within the scope of Victorian painting as well as their significance in the depiction of Clearance-era rural change. It is hoped that the discussion and analysis of these Clearance-induced shifts and after-effects will influence the art historical reading of the spectrum of nineteenth-century Highland paintings by illuminating the varied ways in which the paintings reflect the pervasive course of the Clearances in the Highlands and in Scottish painting.

Table of Paintings

The following table lists all of the relevant paintings cited in the thesis and refers to illustration plate numbers where appropriate. Paintings that are not illustrated, due to reasons of relevancy or unavailability of reproduction, are also noted. Each listing contains the artist's name and dates, painting title and date, medium, size (height and width in centimetres), location, and date of exhibition debut, if available.

Key to Abbreviations of Exhibition Venues:
BI—British Institution, London
GIFA—Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts
NAD—National Academy of Design, New York
NI—National Institution, London
RA—Royal Academy of Arts, London
RI—Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, Edinburgh
RSA—Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh
SFA—Society of Female Artists, London
SPWC—Society of Painters in Watercolour, London

1. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Rent Day, 1807
   Oil on panel
   63 x 88 cm
   Private Collection
   RA 1809

2. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Pitlessie Fair, 1804
   Oil on canvas
   58.5 x 106.7 cm
   National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh
   Pall Mall 1812, RI 1821, RSA 1844

3. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Village Politicians, 1806
   Oil on canvas
   57.2 x 74.9 cm
   The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield
   RA 1806

4. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Blind Fiddler, 1806
   Oil on panel
   57.8 x 79.4 cm
   Tate Gallery, London
   RA 1807, BI 1825

5. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Letter of Introduction, 1813
   Oil on panel
   61 x 50.2 cm
   National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh
   RA 1814

6. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Distraining for Rent, 1815
Oil on panel
81.3 x 123 cm,
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh
RA 1815, BI 1816

7. Thomas Brooks (1818-1891), Relenting, 1855
Oil on canvas
86.4 x 116.9 cm
McCormick Collection

na Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), Under A Cloud, 1878
Oil
RA 1878

8. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Sketch for Distraining for Rent, by 1815
Pencil and watercolour on paper
11.7 x 19 cm
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

9. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Penny Wedding, 1818
Oil on panel
64.4 x 95.6 cm
The Royal Collection
RA 1819, RSA 1829

10. Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler (1846-1933), Evicted, 1890
Oil on canvas
136 x 177.8 cm
University College, Dublin
RA 1890

11. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Sheepwashing, 1817
Oil on panel
90 x 137 cm
National Gallery of Scotland

na Richard Ansdell (1815-1885), Sheepwashing in Glen-Lyon, 1859
Oil
RA 1859

na David Farquharson (1839-1907), Sheep-plunging, 1880
Oil
RA 1880

12. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), A Scene in the Grampians--The Drover's Departure, 1835
Oil on canvas
125.8 x 191.2 cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
RA 1835

13. Richard Ansdell (1815-1885) and William Powell Frith (1819-1909), Sheep Gathering in Glen Sliaghan, Isle of Skye, 1854
Oil on canvas
91.4 x 183.2 cm
Richard Green
Possibly RA 1854

na Peter Graham (1836-1921), A Glint of Sunshine, 1877
Oil
RA 1877

na Peter Graham (1836-1921), A Highland Drove, 1880
Oil
RA 1880

na Henry Garland (1834-1913), A Highland Drove, 1877
Oil
RA 1877

14. Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), A Highland Parting, 1885
Oil on canvas
132.1 x 175.3 cm
McManus Galleries, Dundee

15. Edward Hargitt (1835-1895), The Drovers' Road, 1893
Oil on canvas
89 x 134.5 cm
Fleming Collection

16. William Daniell (1769-1837), Strathnaver, Sutherlandshire, 1813
Ink and colour on paper
20.7 x 28 cm
National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh

17. William Daniell (1769-1837), Gribun Head, Mull, c. 1814
Ink and colour on paper
24 x 16.5
National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh

18. William Daniell (1769-1837), Loch Duich, Ross-shire, c. 1814
Ink and colour on paper
20.6 x 27.7
National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh

na William Quiller Orchardson (1832-1910), Flotsam and Jetsam, 1876
Oil
RA 1876

na Frederick Richard Lee (1798-1879), Gathering Sea-weed, 1837
Oil
RA 1837

19. Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Their Only Harvest, 1879
Oil on canvas
105.4 x 182.2 cm
Tate Gallery, London
RA 1879

na Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Lee Shore, 1879
Oil
RA 1879

na Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Digging for Bait at Daybreak, 1876
Oil
RA 1876

na Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Silver of the Sea, 1880
Oil
International Fisheries Exhibition, London 1883

na Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Lobster Fishers, 1883
Oil
RA 1883

20. Joseph Henderson (1832-1908), Kelp Burning, 1888
Oil on paper
119.4 x 180.3 cm
McManus Galleries, Dundee
Glasgow International Exhibition 1888

21. Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Shearing Wraick in the Sound of Harris, 1876
Oil
Engraved in *Art Journal*, 1880
RA 1876

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Carting Seaweed, 1876
Watercolour
RA 1876

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Burning Kelp, 1876
RA 1876

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Herring Curers, 1879

na Peter Macnab (fl. 1850s-1860s, d. 1900), The Return from the Shielings--A Scene in the Hebrides, 1880
Oil
RA 1880

22. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), An Illicit Whisky Still in the Highlands, 1826-29
Oil on panel
80 x 100.4 cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
RA 1829

23. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Scottish Whisky Still, 1819
Oil on panel
64.8 x 95.9 cm
His Grace the Duke of Westminster
BI 1820

24. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Irish Whiskey Still, 1835-40
Oil on panel
119.4 x 158 cm
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh

na Duncan Cameron (1837-1916), Peat Stacking in Ross-shire, 1880
Oil
RA 1880

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Haymaking in the Highlands, 1878
Oil
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Cutting Peats, c. 1872
Watercolour

na Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Digging Potatoes, c. 1872
Watercolour

25. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Stone Breaker, 1830
Oil on panel
45.8 x 58.5 cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
BI 1830

26. John Brett (1830-1902), The Stone-Breaker, 1858
Oil on canvas
51.3 x 68.5 cm
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool
RA 1858

27. Henry Wallis (1830-1916), The Stonebreaker, 1857-58
Oil on canvas
65.4 x 78.7 cm
Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery
RA 1858

28. Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), The Stonebreakers, 1849-50
Oil on canvas
190 x 300 cm
Formerly Gemaldegalerie, Dresden; now destroyed

29. Henry Bright (c. 1810-1873), A Croft in the Mountains, 1856
Oil on canvas
76 x 134 cm
Sotheby's

30. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Breezy Day, Arran, 1867
Oil on canvas
86.5 x 147 cm
Sotheby's
RA 1867

31. Benjamin Williams Leader (1831-1923), Sketching on the Coast of Arran, 1856
Oil on canvas
57.5 x 75.4 cm
Christie's

na John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Harvesting in Arran, 1866
Oil on canvas
76.2 x 106.7 cm
Christie's
RSA 1866

na Henry Bright (1810-1873) and Thomas Sidney Cooper (1803-1902), The Isle of Arran, Cattle Watering by a Watermill, 1884
Oil on canvas
71.4 x 128.9 cm
Christie's

32. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Spindrift, 1876
Oil on canvas
81.3 x 142.2 cm
Royal Holloway College, London
RA 1876

33. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Sunday in the Highlands, 1881
Oil
Private Collection
Reproduced in W. Mackenzie, *The Book of Arran*, 210
RA 1881

na Charles M'Bryde (fl. 1870s), Wanderer, 1878
Oil
RSA 1878

34. Peter Graham (1836-1921), Homewards, 1872
Oil on canvas
75 x 106.9 cm
Royal Academy Diploma Collection, London
RA 1872

na James Archer (1824-1904), Desolate, 1870
Oil
RSA 1870

na Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), Lonely Tenant of the Glen, 1878
Oil
RA 1878

na Sir William Allan (1782-1850), Leaving Home: A Scene in the Hebrides, 1848
Oil
RSA 1848

na Gustav E. Sintzenich (fl. 1844-1866), The Highlander's Departure, 1848
Oil
RA 1848

na Thomas Faed (1826-1900), First Letter from the Emigrants, 1849
Oil
RSA 1849

na Fanny McIan (1814-1897), Highland Emigration, 1852
Oil
NI 1852, SFA 1857

35. Thomas Falcon Marshall (1818-1878), Emigration--The Parting Day, 1852
Oil
91.4 x 153.6 cm
Christopher Wood Gallery
RA 1852

36. Thomas Webster (1800-1886), A Letter from the Colonies, 1852
Oil on wood
41.3 x 52.1 cm
Tate Gallery, London
RA 1852

37. James Collinson (1825-1881), The Emigration Scheme, 1852
Oil on wood
56.5 x 76.2 cm
Private Collection
NI 1852

38. James Collinson (1825-1881), Answering the Emigrant's Letter, 1850
Oil on panel
70.2 x 89.2 cm
Manchester City Art Gallery
RA 1850

39. Marshall Claxton (1813-1881), An Emigrant's Thoughts of Home, 1859
Oil on cardboard
60.7 x 47 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia
BI 1860

40. Edwin Hayes (1819-1904), An Emigrant Ship, Dublin Bay, Sunset, 1853
Oil on canvas
58 x 86 cm
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

41. Sir Hubert von Herkomer (1849-1914), Pressing to the West: A Scene in Castle Gardens, New York, 1884
Oil on canvas
144 x 215 cm
Leipzig Museum
RA 1884

42. Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893), The Last of England, 1852-55
Oil on wood
82.5 x 75 cm
Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery
Liverpool Academy 1856

43. Jacob Thompson (1806-1879), The Hope Beyond, 1853
Oil
Engraved in *Art Journal*, 1879
RA 1853

na Margaret Gillies (1805-1887), The Highland Emigrant's Last Look at Loch Lomond, 1859
Watercolour
SPWC 1859

44. Henry O'Neil (1817-1880), The Parting Cheer, 1861
Oil on canvas
132 x 186 cm
Christie's, 10 June 1999
RA 1861

45. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), The Last of the Clan, 1865
Oil on canvas
144.8 x 182.9 cm
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow
RA 1865

46. Richard Redgrave (1804-1888), The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home, 1858
Oil on canvas
67.9 x 98.4 cm
Tate Gallery, London
RA 1859

47. Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), An Ejected Family, 1853
Oil on canvas
50 x 82 cm
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

na Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), An Irish Emigrant Landing at Liverpool, 1871
Oil on canvas
141.6 x 101 cm
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh

na Fanny McIan (1814-1897), Exiles from Erin, 1838

na Walter H. Deverell (1827-1854), The Irish Vagrants, 1853
Oil on canvas
62.2 x 75 cm
Johannesburg City Art Gallery

na J.H. Beard (1811-1893), The Last of the Red Man, 1847
Oil
NAD 1847

48. John Watson Nicol (fl. 1876-1924), Lochaber no More, 1883
Oil on canvas
109 x 84 cm
Fleming Collection
RA 1883

49. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner, c. 1837
Oil on panel
45.8 x 66 cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

50. Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), The Emigrants, 1864
Oil on canvas
45.7 x 34.9 cm
Tate Gallery, London
RA 1864

51. George Frederic Watts (1817-1904), The Irish Famine, 1848-49
Oil on canvas
180.4 x 198.1 cm
Watts Gallery, Compton, Surrey

52. Dorothy Tennant (fl. 1879-1909), The Emigrants, 1886
Oil on canvas
114.3 x 76.2 cm
Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield; now destroyed

53. Robert Herdman (1829-1888), Landless and Homeless: Farewell to the Glen "Maybe to return to Lochaber no more," 1887
Oil on canvas
138 x 113.1 cm
RSA 1887

54. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), News from Abroad, 1890
Watercolour
68 x 50 cm
Smith Art Gallery, Halifax, Yorkshire

na Charles Lees (1800-1880), The Emigrant's First Letter from Australia to his Wife, 1874
RSA 1874

na William McTaggart (1835-1910), Word from the West, 1865

55. George Simson (1791-1862), A Coronach in the Backwoods, 1859
Oil on canvas
90 x 66 cm
National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh

56. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Sunday in the Backwoods of Canada, 1859
Oil on canvas
106.7 x 144.8 cm
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada
Smaller version (55.9 x 76.2 cm) at Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Museum
RA 1859

57. John Ritchie (fl. 1858-1875), Life in the Backwoods, by 1861
Oil on canvas
81.5 x 107 cm
Sotheby's, 7 June 2005
Liverpool Academy 1861

58. Elizabeth Walker (1800-1876), The Emigrants, c. 1845
Lithograph
45.2 x 57.2 cm
National Library of Australia, Canberra

59. Horatio McCulloch (1805-1867), My Heart's in the Highlands, 1860
Oil on canvas
61 x 91.4 cm
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow
GIFA 1867

na Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935), My Heart's in the Highlands, 1890
Oil
RA 1890

60. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Oh Why Left I My Hame?, 1886
Oil on canvas
112.8 x 156 cm
Sunderland Art Gallery
RA 1886

61. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Thoughts of Home, 1862
Oil
47 x 33 cm
Sotheby's, 30 August 1974

62. William McTaggart (1835-1910), Lochaber no More, by 1866
Engraving

63. William McTaggart (1835-1910), Emigrants Leaving the Hebrides, 1883-89
Oil on canvas
94.6 x 141 cm
Tate Gallery, London

64. William McTaggart (1835-1910), The Emigrants--America, 1891-94
Oil on canvas
145 x 216 cm
Flure Grossart

65. William McTaggart (1835-1910), The Sailing of the Emigrant Ship, 1895
Oil on canvas
77 x 87.5 cm
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh

66. R.N. Millman (1975 16, plate 2), Helmsdale, Sutherland, undated
Photograph
John Dewar Studios

67. R.N. Millman (1975 19, plate 3), Borve, Barra, undated
Photograph
Cambridge University Collection,

68. Paul Sandby (1725-1809), View in Strathtay, 1747
Pen and watercolour on paper
National Library of Wales

69. After Paul Sandby, View in Strathtay, 1780
Engraving
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh

70. Macneill Macleay (c. 1806-1878), Head of Loch Eil, 1840
Oil on canvas
78.7 x 120.6 cm
Fleming Collection
RA 1839, RSA 1840

71. Arthur Perigal (1816-1884), Moorland Near Kinlochewe, Ross-shire, 1868
Oil on canvas
58.4 x 91.4 cm
Royal Scottish Academy (Diploma Collection), Edinburgh
RSA 1869

72. Peter Graham (1836-1921), A Spate in the Highlands, 1866
Oil on canvas
120 x 176.8 cm
Manchester City Art Gallery
RA 1866

73. Peter Graham (1836-1921), Ruins of Other Times, undated
Oil
89 x 155 cm
Sotheby's, 11 April 1978

74. Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935), The Joyless Winter Day, 1883
Oil on canvas
104.1 x 180.3 cm
Tate Gallery, London
RA 1883

75. Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935), The Sun Peeped O'er Yon Southland Hills, 1908
Oil on canvas
42 x 60 cm
Richard Green
RA 1908

76. Horatio McCulloch (1805-1867), Glencoe, 1864
Oil on canvas
110.5 x 182.9 cm
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow
RSA 1865

77. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Monarch of the Glen, 1851
Oil on canvas
63.8 x 68.9 cm
Diageo
RA 1851

78. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), Highlanders Returning from Deerstalking, 1827
Oil on panel
60.3 x 73 cm
Duke of Northumberland
RA 1827, BI 1828

79. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), Return from the Staghunt, 1837
Oil on canvas
35.5 x 160 cm
Private Collection
RA 1837

na Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), Death of the Stag in Glen Tilt, 1824-30.
Oil on canvas
149.8 x 200.8 cm
The Blair Charitable Trust, Blair Castle

80. William Beattie Brown (1831-1909), Coire-na-Faireamh (Applecross Deer Forest, Ross-shire), 1883-84
Oil on canvas
67.8 x 114.6 cm
Royal Scottish Academy (Diploma Collection), Edinburgh
RSA 1883

81. David Farquharson (1839-1907), The End of the Day's Fishing, 1879-85
Oil on canvas
56 x 91.5 cm
Sotheby's

82. Carl Suhrlandt (1828-1919), A Day's Grouse Shooting on the Glentanar Estate, 1889
Oil on canvas
95 x 139.5 cm
Christie's

83. Hans Fredrik Gude (1825-1903), Oban Bay, 1889
Oil on canvas
81.5 x 124 cm
Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo

84. Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), Deerstalking on Jura, 1875
Oil on canvas
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow
RA 1875

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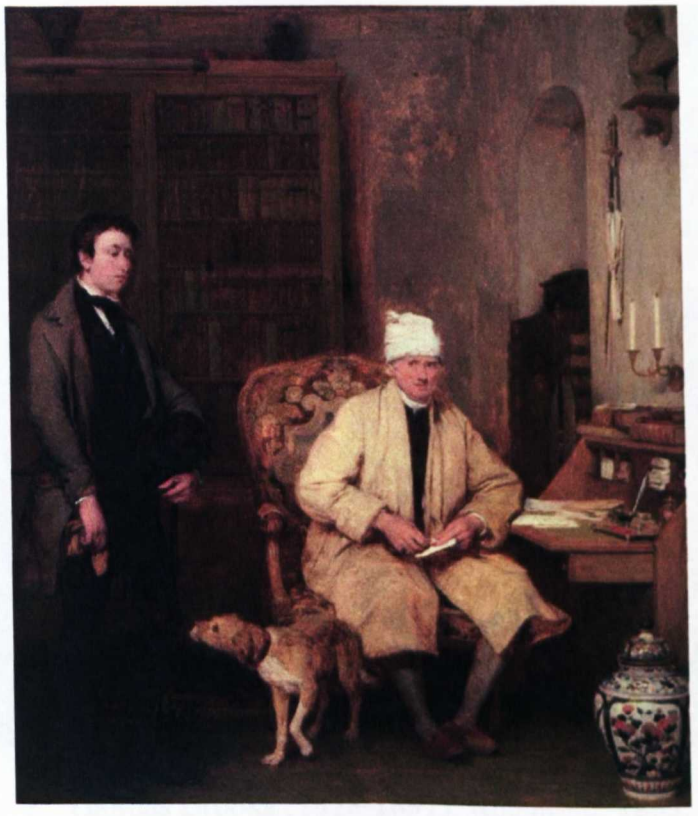
1. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Rent Day, 1807.
Oil on panel. 63 x 88 cm. Private Collection.

2. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Pitlessie Fair, 1804.
Oil on canvas. 58.5 x 106.7 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

3. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Village Politicians, 1806.
Oil on canvas. 57.2 x 74.9 cm. The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Mansfield and Mansfield.

4. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Blind Fiddler, 1806.
Oil on panel. 57.8 x 79.4 cm. Tate Gallery, London.



5. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Letter of Introduction, 1813.
Oil on panel. 61 x 50.2 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

6. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Distraining for Rent, 1815.
Oil on panel. 81.3 x 123 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

7. Thomas Brooks (1818-1891), Relenting, 1855.
Oil on canvas. 86.4 x 116.9 cm. McCormick Collection.

8. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Sketch for Distraining for Rent, by 1815.
Pencil and watercolour on paper. 11.7 x 19 cm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

9. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Penny Wedding, 1818.
Oil on panel. 64.4 x 95.6 cm. The Royal Collection.

10. Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler (1846-1933), Evicted, 1890.
Oil on canvas. 136 x 177.8 cm. University College, Dublin.

11. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Sheepwashing, 1817.
Oil on panel. 90 x 137 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

12. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Drovers' Departure, 1835.
Oil on canvas. 125.8 x 191.2 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

13. Richard Ansdell (1815-1885) and William Powell Frith (1819-1909), Sheep Gathering in Glen Sliaghan, Isle of Skye, 1854.
Oil on canvas. 91.4 x 183.2 cm. Richard Green.

14. Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), A Highland Parting, 1885.
Oil on canvas. 132.1 x 175.3 cm. McManus Galleries, Dundee.

15. Edward Hargitt (1835-1895), The Drovers' Road, 1893.
Oil on canvas. 89 x 134.5 cm. Fleming Collection.

16. William Daniell (1769-1837), Strathnaver, Sutherlandshire, 1813.
Ink and colour on paper. 20.7 x 28 cm. National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh.

17. William Daniell (1769-1837), Gribun Head, Mull, c. 1814.
Ink and colour on paper. 24 x 16.5 cm. National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh.

18. William Daniell (1769-1837), Loch Duich, Ross-shire, c. 1814.
Ink and colour on paper. 20.6 x 27.7 cm. National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh.

19. Colin Hunter (1841-1904), Their Only Harvest, 1879.
Oil on canvas. 105.4 x 182.2 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

20. Joseph Henderson (1832-1908), Kelp Burning, 1888.
Oil on paper. 119.4 x 180.3 cm. McManus Galleries, Dundee.

21. Hamilton Macallum (1841-1896), Shearing Wraick in the Sound of Harris, 1876. Reproduced in *Art-Journal*, 1880.

22. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), An Illicit Whisky Still in the Highlands, 1826-29.
Oil on panel. 80 x 100.4 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

23. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Scottish Whisky Still, 1819.
Oil on panel. 64.8 x 95.9 cm. His Grace the Duke of Westminster.

24. Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), The Irish Whiskey Still, 1835-40.
Oil on panel. 119.4 x 158 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

25. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Stone Breaker, 1830.
Oil on panel. 45.8 x 58.5 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

26. John Brett (1830-1902), The Stone-Breaker, 1858.
Oil on canvas. 51.3 x 68.5 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

27. Henry Wallis (1830-1916), The Stonebreaker, 1857-58.
Oil on canvas. 65.4 x 78.7 cm. Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

28. Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), The Stonebreakers, 1849-50.
Oil on canvas. 190 x 300 cm. Gemaldegalerie, Dresden; now destroyed.

29. Henry Bright (c. 1810-1873), A Croft in the Mountains, 1856.
Oil on canvas. 76 x 134 cm. Sotheby's.

30. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Breezy Day, Arran, 1867.
Oil on canvas. 86.5 x 147 cm. Sotheby's.

31. Benjamin Williams Leader (1831-1923), Sketching on the Coast of Arran, 1856.
Oil on canvas. 57.5 x 75.4 cm. Christie's.

32. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Spindrift, 1876.
Oil on canvas. 81.3 x 142.2 cm. Royal Holloway College, London.

33. John MacWhirter (1838-1911), Sunday in the Highlands, 1881.
Oil. Private Collection.

34. Peter Graham (1836-1921), Homewards, 1872.
Oil on canvas. 75 x 106.9 cm. Royal Academy Diploma Collection, London.

35. Thomas Falcon Marshall (1818-1878), Emigration—The Parting Day, 1852. Oil. 91.4 x 153.6 cm. Christopher Wood Gallery.

36. Thomas Webster (1800-1886), A Letter from the Colonies, 1852. Oil on wood. 41.3 x 52 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

37. James Collinson (1825-1881), The Emigration Scheme, 1852.
Oil on wood. 56.5 x 76.2 cm. Private Collection.

38. James Collinson (1825-1881), Answering the Emigrant's Letter, 1850.
Oil on panel. 70.2 x 89.2 cm. Manchester City Art Gallery.

39. Marshall Claxton (1813-1881), An Emigrant's Thoughts of Home, 1859. Oil on cardboard. 60.7 x 47 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Australia.

40. Edwin Hayes (1819-1904), An Emigrant Ship, Dublin Bay, Sunset, 1853. Oil on canvas. 58 x 86 cm. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.

41. Sir Hubert von Herkomer (1849-1914), Pressing to the West: A Scene in Castle Gardens, New York, 1884.
Oil on canvas. 144 x 215 cm. Leipzig Museum.

42. Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893), The Last of England, 1852-55.
Oil on wood. 82.5 x 75 cm. Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

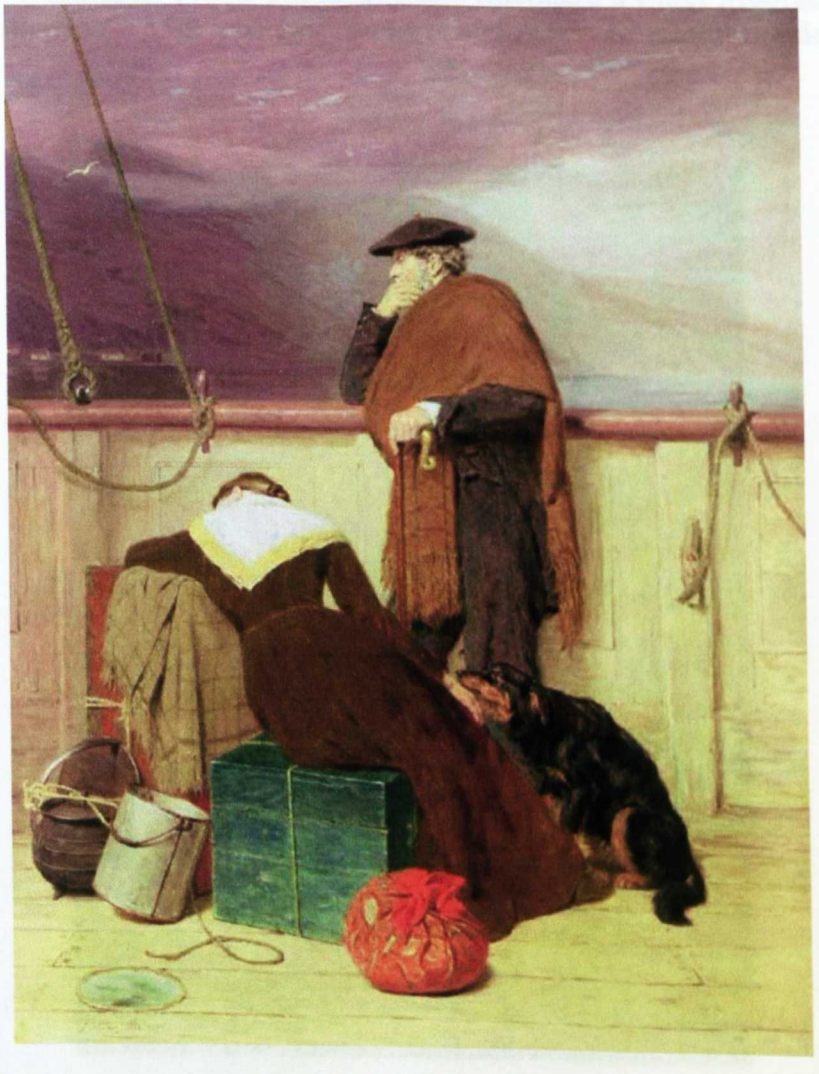
43. Jacob Thompson (1806-1879), The Hope Beyond, 1853.
Reproduced in *Art-Journal*, 1879.

44. Henry O'Neil (1817-1880), The Parting Cheer, 1861.
Oil on canvas. 132 x 186 cm. Christie's, 10 June 1999.

45. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), The Last of the Clan, 1865.
Oil on canvas. 144.8 x 182.9 cm. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.

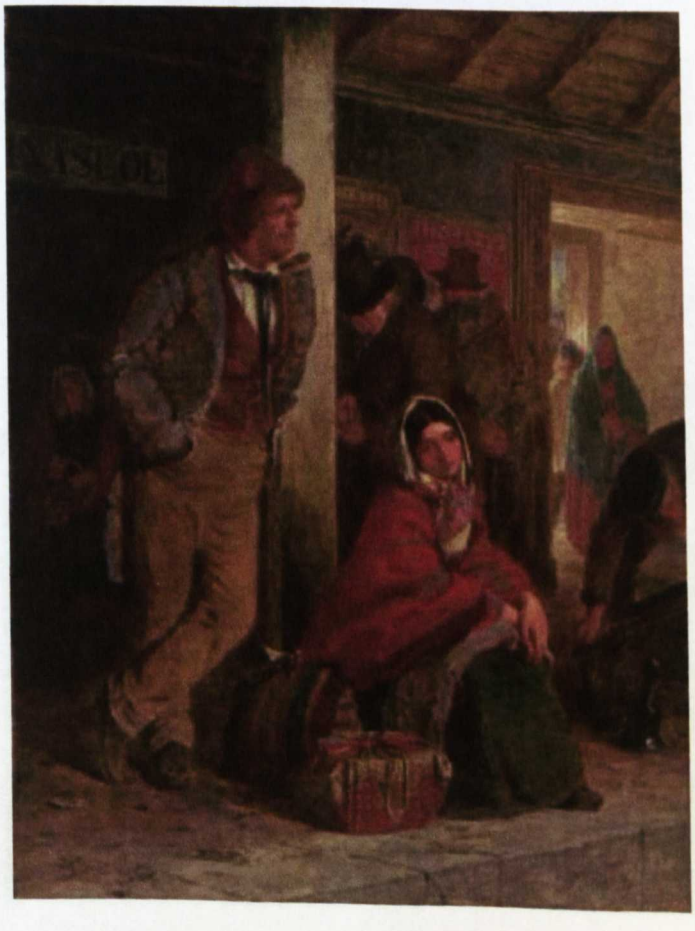
46. Richard Redgrave (1804-1888), The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home, 1858.
Oil on canvas. 67.9 x 98.4 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

47. Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), An Ejected Family, 1853.
Oil on canvas. 50 x 82 cm. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.



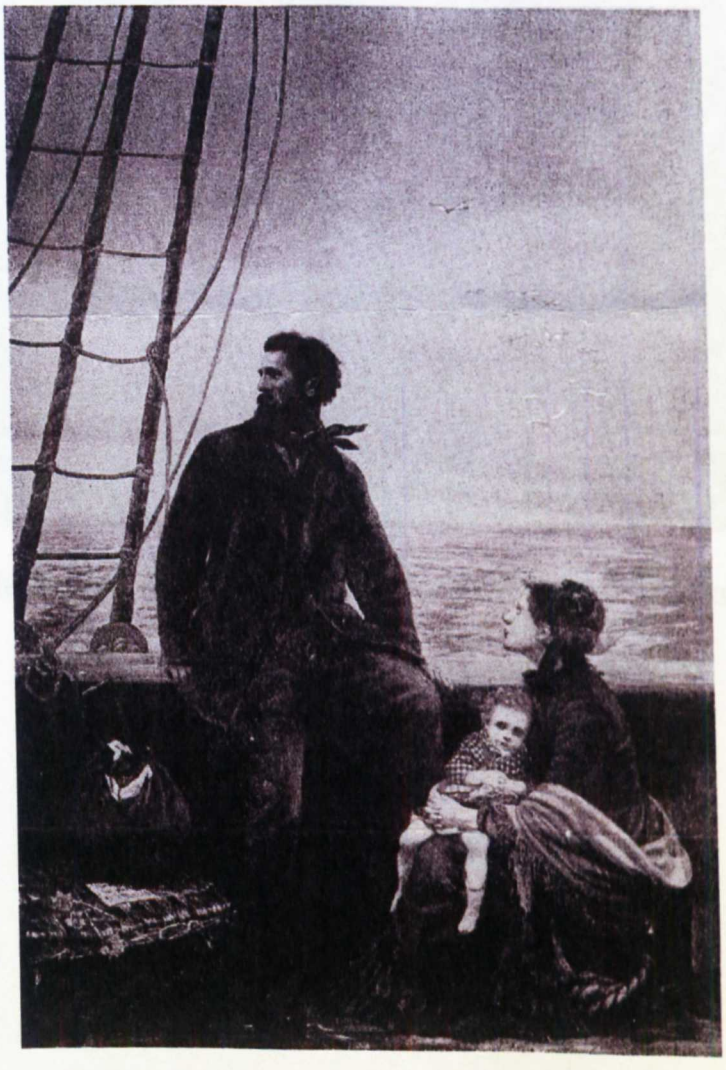
48. John Watson Nicol (fl. 1876-1924), Lochaber no More, 1883.
Oil on canvas. 109 x 84 cm. Fleming Collection.

49. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner, c. 1837. Oil on panel. 45.8 x 66 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

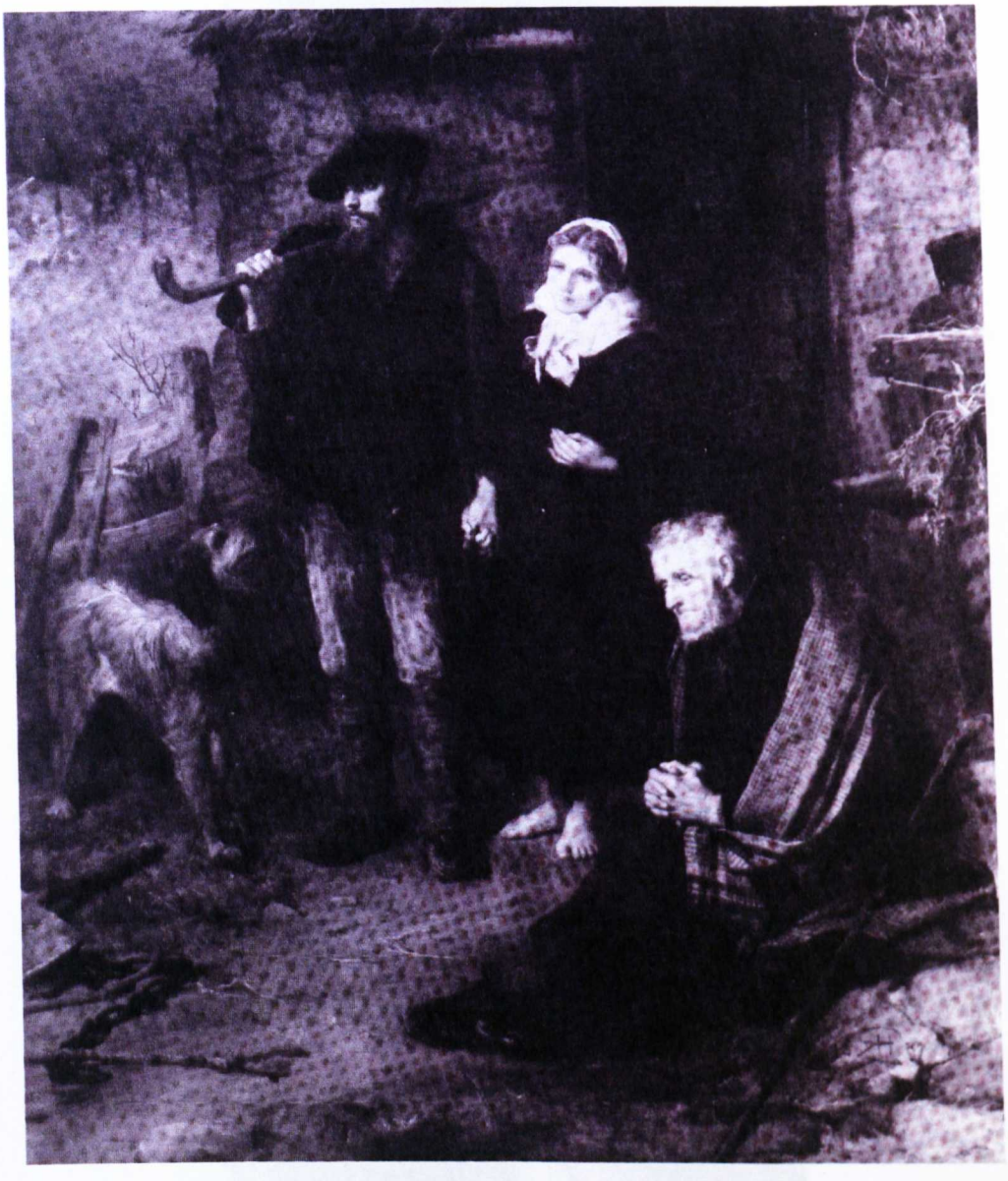


50. Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), The Emigrants, 1864. Oil on canvas. 45.7 x 34.9 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

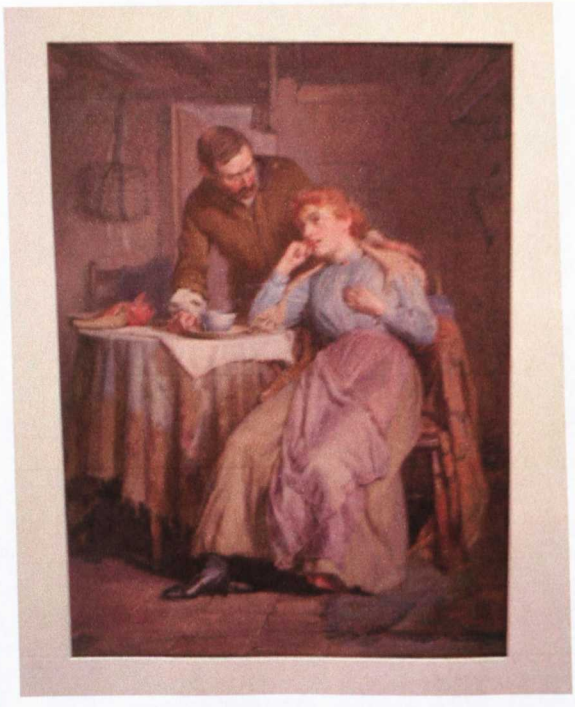
51. George Frederic Watts (1817-1904), The Irish Famine, 1848-49.
Oil on canvas. 180.4 x 198.1 cm. Watts Gallery, Compton, Surrey.



52. Dorothy Tennant (fl. 1879-1909), The Emigrants, 1886.
Oil on canvas. 114.3 x 76.2 cm. Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield; now destroyed.



53. Robert Herdman (1829-1888), Landless and Homeless: Farewell to the Glen "Maybe to Return to Lochaber no More," 1887.
Oil on canvas. 138 x 113.1 cm. Location unknown.



54. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), News from Abroad, 1890.
Watercolour. 68 x 50 cm. Smith Art Gallery, Halifax, Yorkshire.

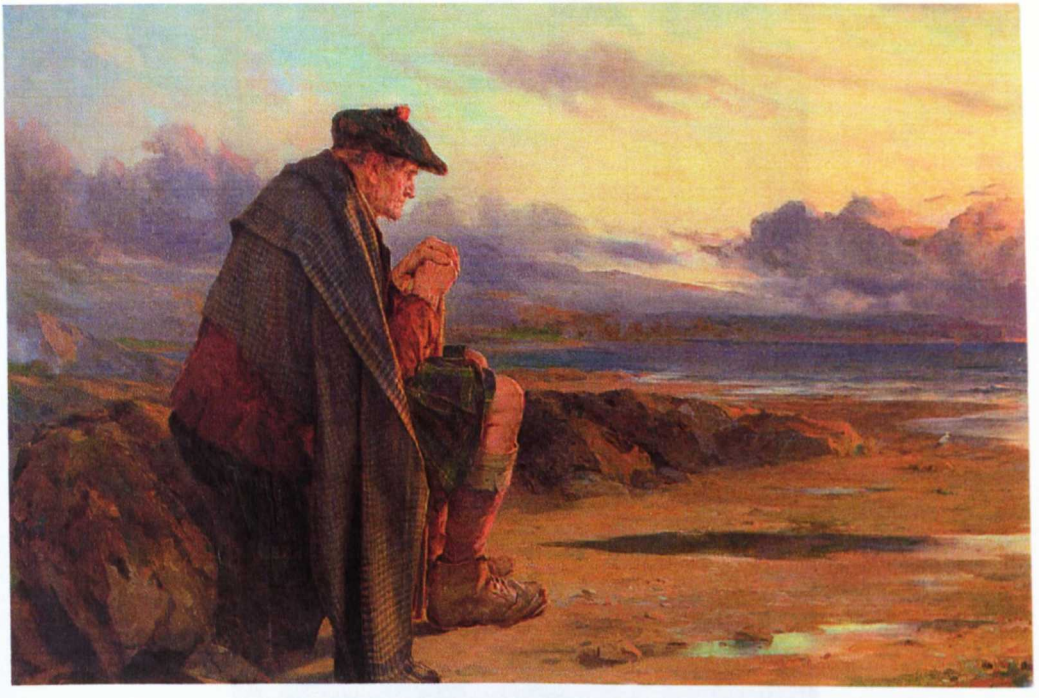
55. George Simson (1791-1862), A Coronach in the Backwoods, 1859.
Oil on canvas. 90 x 66 cm. National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh.

56. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Sunday in the Backwoods of Canada, 1859.
Oil on canvas. 55.9 x 76.2 cm. Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Museum.
(Another version of this work is at the Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Canada)

57. John Ritchie (fl. 1858-1875), Life in the Backwoods, by 1861.
Oil on canvas. 81.5 x 107 cm. Sotheby's, 7 June 2005.

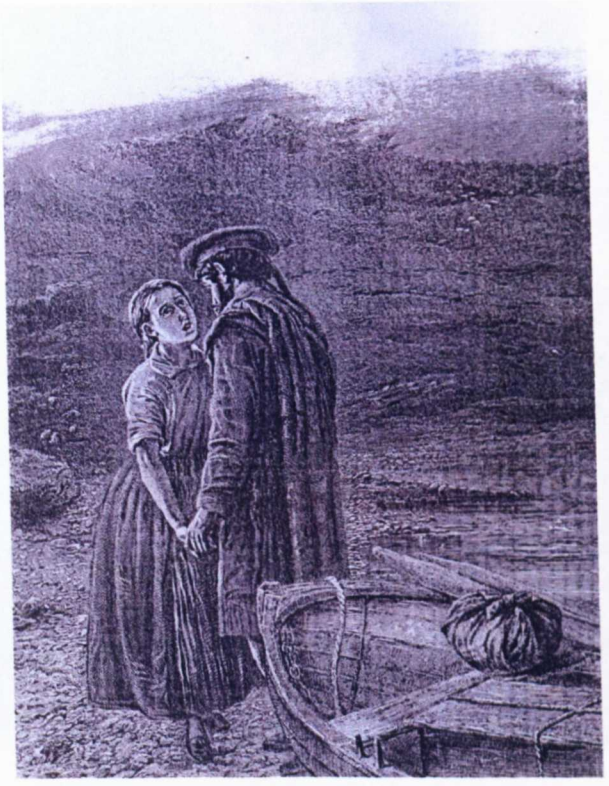
58. Elizabeth Walker, The Emigrants, c. 1845.
Lithograph. 45.2 x 57.2 cm. National Library of Australia, Canberra.

59. Horatio McCulloch (1805-1867), My Heart's in the Highlands, 1860.
Oil on canvas. 61 x 91.4 cm. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.



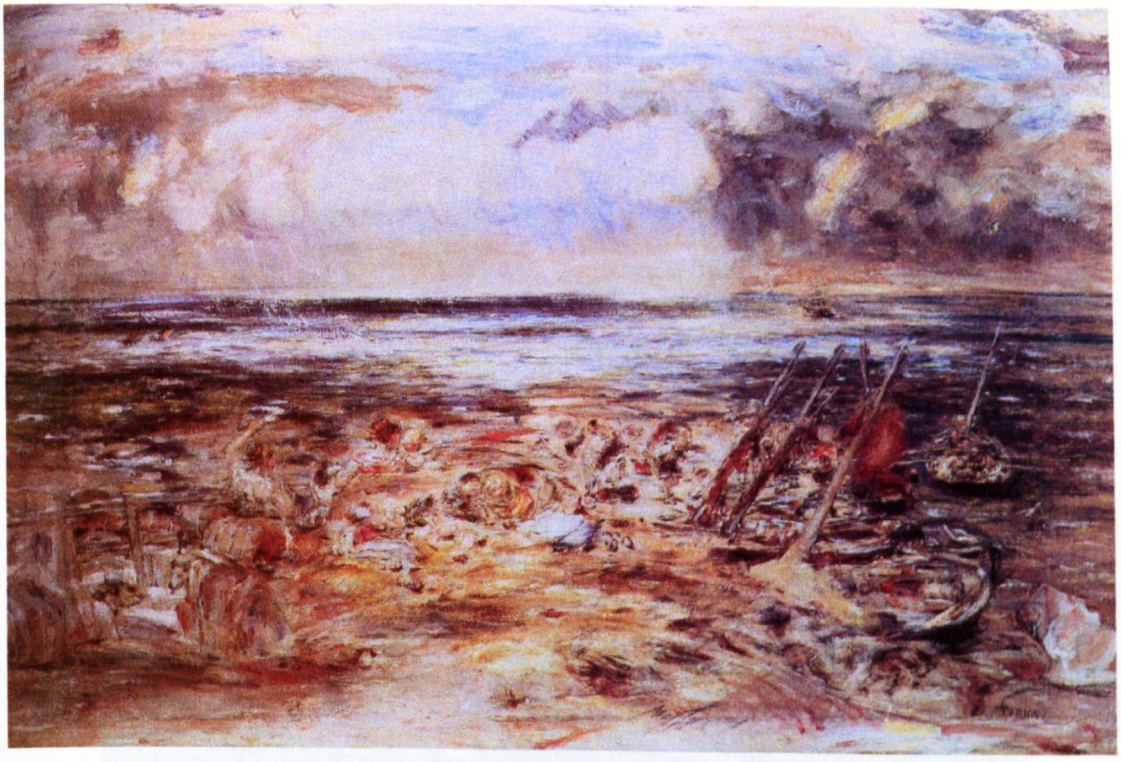
60. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Oh Why Left I My Hame?, 1886.
Oil on canvas. 112.8 x 156 cm. Sunderland Art Gallery.

61. Thomas Faed (1826-1900), Thoughts of Home, 1862.
Oil. 47 x 33 cm. Sotheby's, 30 August 1974.

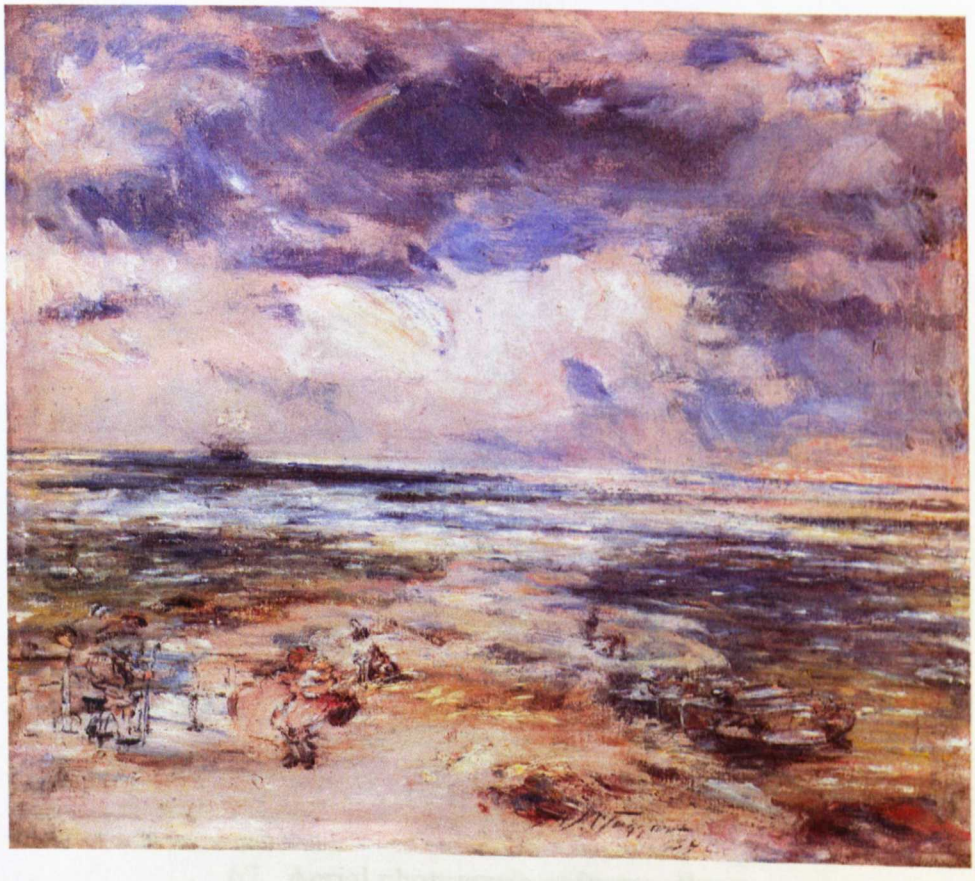


62. William McTaggart (1835-1910), Lochaber no More, by 1866.
Engraving after oil painting.

63. William McTaggart (1835-1910), Emigrants Leaving the Hebrides, 1883-89.
Oil on canvas. 94.6 x 141 cm. Tate Gallery, London.



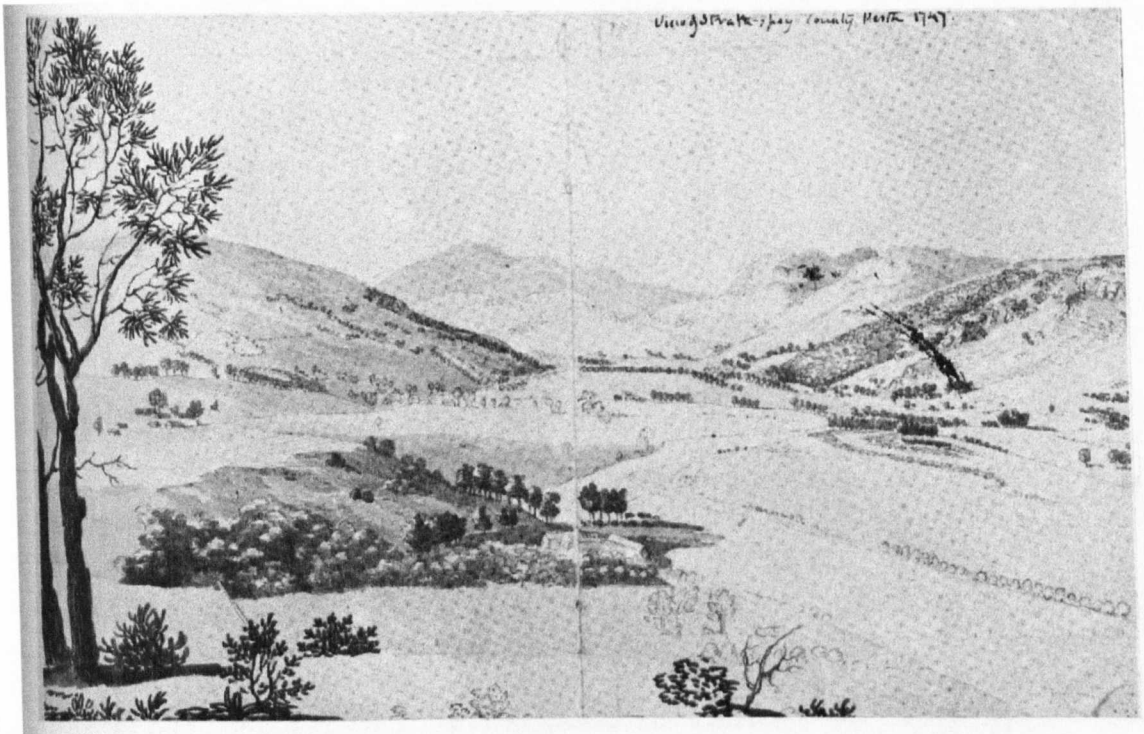
64. William McTaggart (1835-1910), The Emigrants—America, 1891-94.
Oil on canvas. 145 x 216 cm. Flure Grossart.

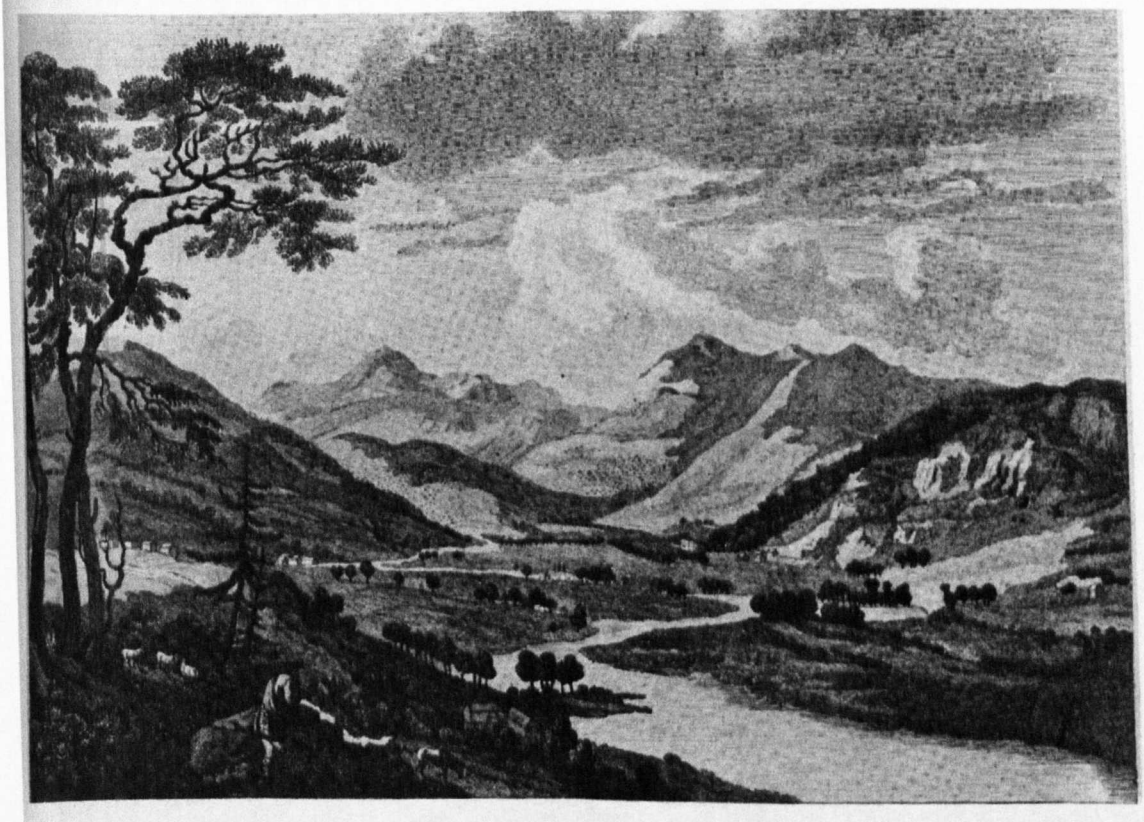


65. William McTaggart (1835-1910), The Sailing of the Emigrant Ship, 1895.
Oil on canvas. 77 x 87.5 cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

66. Aerial photograph of Helmsdale, Sutherland.
John Dewar Studios (Millman 16, plate 2).

67. Aerial photograph of Borve, Barra.
Cambridge University Collection (Millman 19, plate 3).





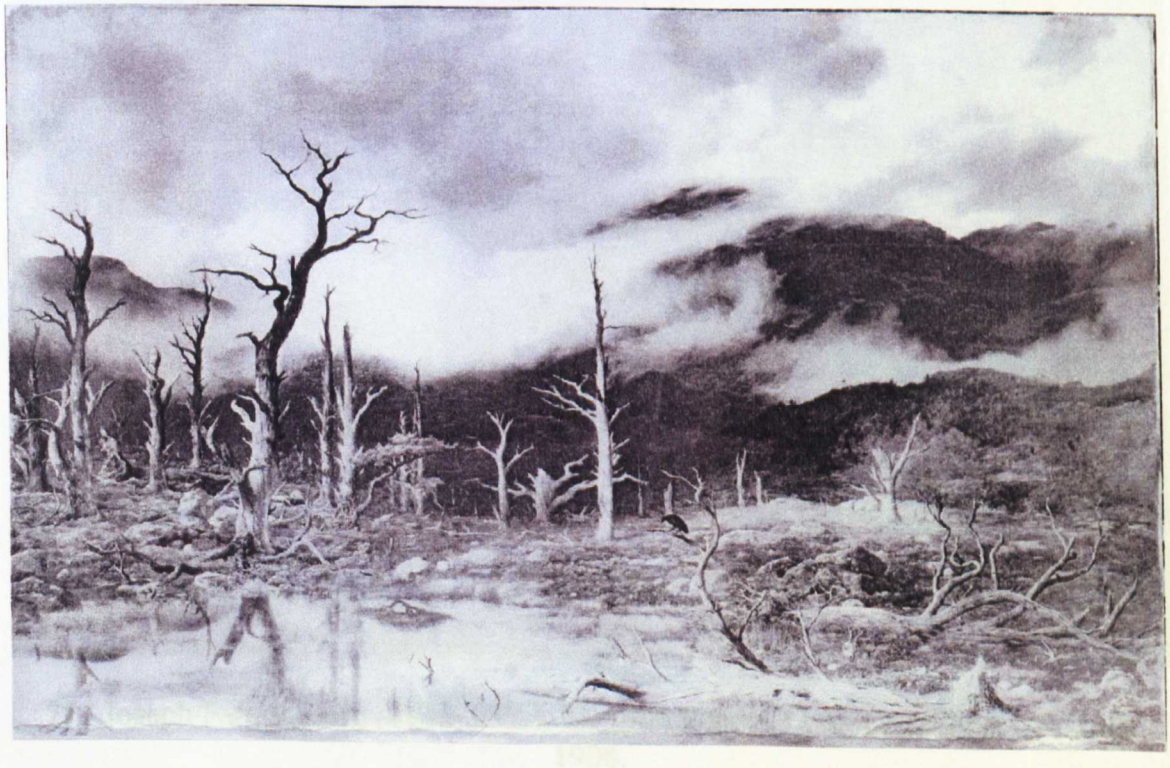
68. Paul Sandby (1725-1809), View in Strathtay, 1747.
Pen and watercolour on paper. National Library of Wales.

69. After Paul Sandby, View in Strathtay, 1780.
Engraving. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

70. Macneill Macleay (c. 1806-1878), Head of Loch Eil, 1840.
Oil on canvas. 78.7 x 120.6 cm. Fleming Collection.

71. Arthur Perigal (1816-1884), Moorland Near Kinlochewe, Ross-shire, 1868.
Oil on canvas. 58.4 x 91.4 cm. Royal Scottish Academy (Diploma Collection).

72. Peter Graham (1836-1921), A Spate in the Highlands, 1866.
Oil on canvas. 120 x 176.8 cm. Manchester City Art Gallery.



73. Peter Graham (1836-1921), Ruins of Other Times, undated.
Oil. 89 x 155 cm. Sotheby's, 11 April 1978.

74. Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935), The Joyless Winter Day, 1883.
Oil on canvas. 104.1 x 180.3 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

75. Joseph Farquharson (1846-1935), The Sun Peeped O'er Yon Southland Hills, 1908.
Oil on canvas. 42 x 60 cm. Richard Green.

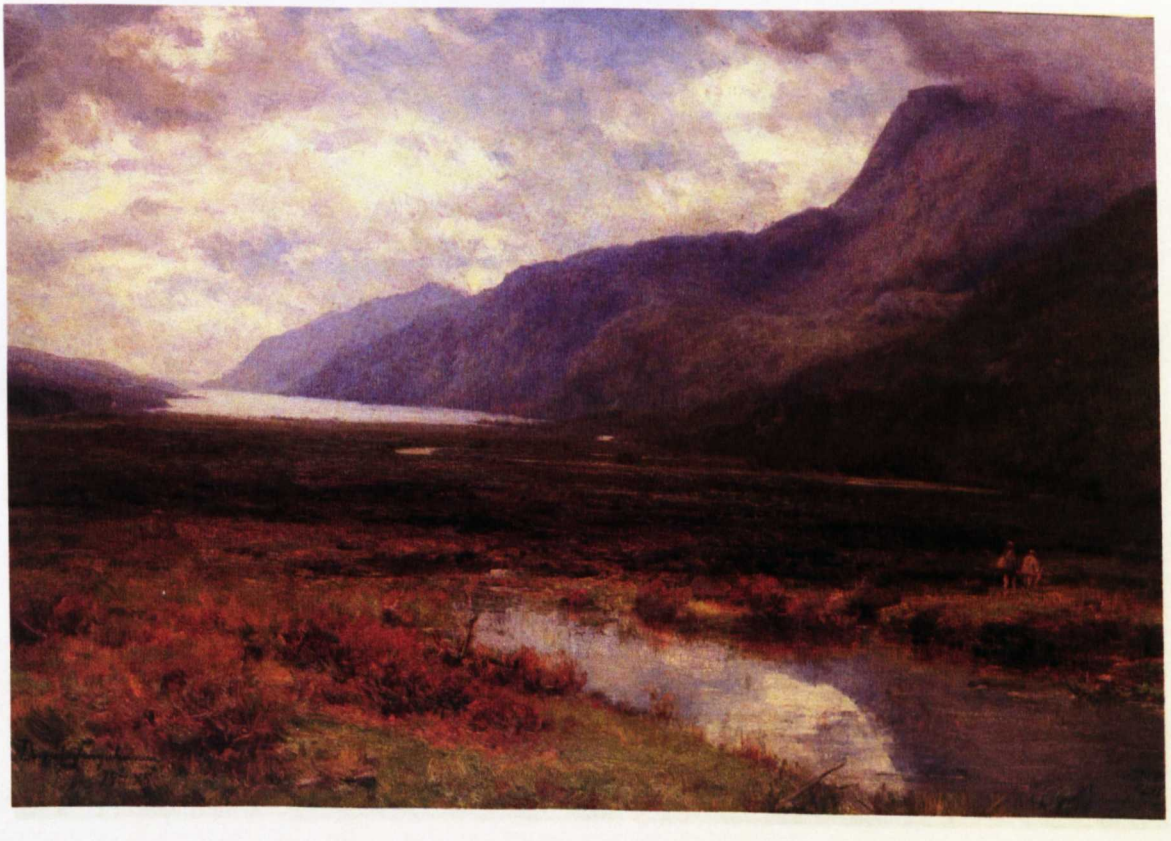
76. Horatio McCulloch (1805-1867), Glencoe, 1864.
Oil on canvas. 110.5 x 182.9 cm. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.

77. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), The Monarch of the Glen, 1851.
Oil on canvas. 63.8 x 68.9 cm. Diageo.

78. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), Highlanders Returning from Deerstalking, 1827.
Oil on panel. 60.3 x 73 cm. Duke of Northumberland.

79. Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), Return from the Staghunt, 1837.
Oil on canvas. 35.5 x 160 cm. Private Collection.

80. William Beattie Brown (1831-1909), Coire-na-Faireamh (Applecross Deer Forest, Ross-shire), 1883-83.
Oil on canvas. 67.8 x 114.6 cm. Royal Scottish Academy (Diploma Collection).



81. David Farquharson (1839-1907), The End of the Day's Fishing, 1879-85.
Oil on canvas. 56 x 91.5 cm. Sotheby's.

82. Carl Suhrlandt (1828-1919), A Day's Grouse Shooting on the Glentanar Estate, 1889.
Oil on canvas. 95 x 139.5 cm. Christie's.

83. Hans Fredrik Gude (1825-1903), Oban Bay, 1889.
Oil on canvas. 81.5 x 124 cm. Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo.

84. Gourlay Steell (1819-1894), Deerstalking on Jura, 1875.
Oil on canvas. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.